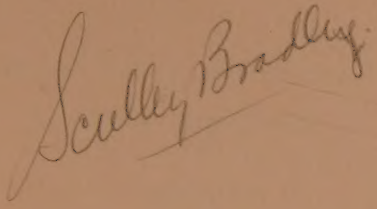
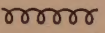


Prose, Poetry and Drama
for Oral Interpretation



Prose, Poetry and Drama for Oral Interpretation

Selected and Arranged by

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PROSE, POETRY AND DRAMA FOR ORAL INTERPRETATION

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The author takes pleasure in acknowledging his indebtedness to the publishers who have very kindly permitted the use of their copyrighted material.

W. J. F.

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FOREWORD

THIS book has been compiled by the author to be used as a text-book in oral expression courses. In planning it he has kept certain criteria in mind for testing the value and usefulness of the selections to be included.

Most of these criteria are based on the assumption that oral reading is an essential and substantial form of training for general speech effectiveness, that it is a means to the practical end of good speech and not an end in itself.

Thus the material in the book has been so balanced that the important expression problems which confront the student of speech are brought into focus in the respective selections. These problems range from the fundamental one of proper intellectual emphasis, to those of flexibility, conversational variety, and so on. It will be noted that there are many prose selections in the form of the animated informal essay. It is suggested that these essays and the eloquent prose as well be delivered with the book on a stand. Memorization is discouraged. The material should, however, be perfectly in hand and thoroughly assimilated. The student should have the same communicative relationship with his audience as he would have in public speaking.

The longer stories and the three long plays have been included for group study. It is suggested that these stories, such as the one by Tarkington, be broken up into sections and assigned to a group of, say, eight or ten students who read in sequence. They will profit by the inevitable comparisons which will be manifest. The long plays, such as the one by Pinero, are well employed if interpreted by a cast of characters sitting in a semicircle with an interpolator to make necessary explanations. It is most important that the interpolator enter into the spirit of the play.

The above methods of handling this material are given merely to

indicate its potentialities for offering a series of stimulating projects in oral expression. It is the author's hope that the book will facilitate the use of oral reading as a vital form of speech training.

PREFACE

A. THE OBJECTIVE ATTITUDE OF THE ORAL INTERPRETER

The literature gathered together in this book is meant to be communicated in the same manner as a public speaker communicates his ideas to an audience. As far as the attitude of the speaker toward his audience is concerned, there is no difference. In each case the speaker has submerged himself in the engrossing business of stirring up his audience just as his material has stirred him. Even in those selections which involve impersonation, such as the dramatic monologues, the speaker's aim should not be that of calling attention to himself as the impersonator, but rather that of impressing his audience with the truthfulness and significance of certain human relationships. Through the talk of the character in "Rest-Cure," for instance, the speaker gives the audience a satire on "hospital-quiet."

The importance of this objective attitude in the oral reading class cannot be overestimated. As soon as this attitude weakens we have an undesirable element of display and artifice creeping in. It creeps in all too readily, for it is a human weakness to seek personal admiration. We can well afford to keep in mind that in both the useful art of public speaking and the fine art of interpretative reading the performer is fundamentally self-effacing.

B. THOUGHT AND EMOTION IN READING

The content to be communicated by the oral reader can be put under two main heads: intellectual values and emotional values. The first is concerned with the sheer thought conveyed by the material. It remains essentially the same with any reader. The second has to do with the speaker's individual response to the material—his associations, feelings, attitudes, as called up in reading. Intellectual values

are often slighted in oral reading in favor of vague emotionalizing. When this happens the whole performance is futile. Before the reader can give to the material the creative treatment of his own feelings and attitudes, he must make sure that the intellectual foundation is sound. What is emphasized as new and what is passed over as already familiar? In other words, when does the voice lift in assertion and when is it dropped in implication? What is the dictionary meaning of certain words? Where is one idea balanced against another? Are the series of expressions in a certain sentence all of equal value or are some subordinate to others? These are a few of the thought relationships which must be thoroughly grasped. The capacity to do this is the first step in training for reading or speaking.

C. THE CREATIVE ACTIVITY OF THE READER

If we look upon literature as an idealized pattern or unit of life presented in words, we may say this book is a collection of word patterns waiting to be materialized by the reader. The pattern may be a plot or narrative sequence, it may be an intense mood such as we find in Poe's writing, it may be a point of view on life as in Wordsworth's sonnet, "The world is too much with us." It may be all of these and many more combined in one great pattern, as in Shakespeare's *King Lear*.

But there are many patterns or units of life presented in words which are by no means literature. The minutes of the meeting of a literary society present a unit or episode in words; the meeting had a beginning, a middle, and an end. It may have accomplished something, have had point. Yet the record of it is not literature because it has not been seen in the light of a certain ideal, of a generalized feeling. Now if the writer of these minutes were to observe how they reveal the tendency of many meetings to become a mere display of Robert's *Rules of Order* and an entanglement of parliamentary gymnastics, he might by virtue of this larger perspective handle his subject in such a way as to make his minutes a satire on the meeting. Thus they become in a sense literature—an idealized pattern of reality.

Suppose this little satire on meetings were included in this book and you as a student were given it to read to an audience. You naturally would not have exactly the same picture of literary societies

as its author. All the selection can do is offer its arrangement of words as symbols for stirring up your meanings, feelings, pictures, memories, and attitudes concerning group meetings and turn them in the direction of satire. Herein lies the creative opportunity of the reader. What he makes of the pattern the author has given him depends on his alertness, his sensitivity, his memories, his belief in himself. The pattern will be much the same with any reader, but the quality or texture of the material which goes to make up that pattern is as infinitely varied as are the personalities of human beings.

D. A COMPLETE AND UNIFIED RESPONSE ESSENTIAL

We may say that the success of the oral reader depends upon the fullness and unity of his response. Half-hearted response is as futile in oral reading as it is elsewhere. Confused, vague, and disjointed response is equally futile. The reader must get the intellectual content of his material, perceive its images, and feel the emotions involved; and in each case his response must be full and clear. Here are a few suggestions for attaining that end.

The reader must believe in himself. He must not hesitate in asserting his beliefs and feelings. The essence of Abbé Dimnet's stimulating little book, *The Art of Thinking*, is "Be yourself if you want to create anything original." Let your feelings and attitudes come straight from your heart and soul without interference by doubts and fears. What Abbé Dimnet says, or implies, again and again in his book is that you must feel straight if you are to think straight.

The reader must be generous of himself. He must bring to bear upon his material the full force of his mental and emotional equipment. The generous reader is the most communicative; he anticipates his audience's needs, stresses the essential, makes careful transitions and differentiations, and keeps his ideas coherent.

Finally, the reader must rid himself of certain hampering misconceptions regarding oral reading. First, that it is a thing of the make-believe world that demands a special way of doing things—a theatrical way. Second, that in oral reading one memorizes what he reads. Most of the material in this book should be read with the book on a reading stand (preferably a light music stand) before him. Third, that his reading must have some special "artistic" quality quite differ-

ent from his usual behavior. The most artistic reading is that which is most genuinely conceived and sincerely executed.

E. A SUGGESTION AS TO THE USE OF THE BOOK

The student will find a wide variety of literature in this book, involving many forms of writing and many moods and attitudes. There is, for instance, the light, informal essay in oral style, and there is the formal speech in the eloquent mood of oratory. There is the simple narrative in prose and poetry and there is poetry which approaches the epic in mood. To list the distinct modes of oral expression demanded by the various types of the selections would take much space and is unnecessary here. In working with the different types of selections the student should endeavor to catch the essential mood or attitude of the selection and make his response as complete and true as possible. For instance, if he were assigned a selection in which an easy-going rural character speaks, we, the audience, should get the totality of the character in the student's reading. We should get it in the rhythm of the voice and body, in the inflections of the voice, in the posture, in the easy, offhand movements, and in the general warmth of the personality. It is suggested, then, that the student's assignments be a series of projects, each involving a total unit of human expression. In this way oral reading offers not only a training in vocal expressiveness but also a means of growth to the whole personality.

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I

The Narrative in Prose and Poetry

1. Short Stories, Episodes, and Sketches

THE WISDOM OF KING SOLOMON [1]

Roark Bradford

Ole King David was a king which liked to have a heap er chilluns runnin' round de house. And hit seem like ev'y one er his chillun wanted to be king. So 'bout de time one of 'em up and said he wanted to be de king 'cause he's de oldest, hit seem like a bunch of hard luck happened to him and he died. And den de next oldest boy on deck had some hard luck, and right on down de line. But hit was one er de boys name Solomon which ain't sayin' a word 'bout bein' de king. He jest went on and studied his books and kept his mouf shet.

"Dat boy Solomon," King David tole de Lawd one day, "is makin' some mighty good marks in school. He liable to grow up to be a lawyer some er dese days."

"Cou'se he's makin' good marks," say de Lawd. "Dat boy got a haid on him as long as a mule, right now, and efn he keeps hit up and don't go runnin' round wid de gals too much, I got somethin' in my mind about him."

So de yuther brothers kept fightin' 'mongst theyse'ves about which is gonter be king when David dies, so when David died Solomon up and put on de crown and de robe and he was king. And Solomon was a smart king, too.

Well, about de fust thing Solomon happened up against was two ladies fightin' over a baby which got mixed up in de hospital or somethin'.

"Dat's my young'n," say one er de ladies.

"Ain't no sich yo' young'n," say de yuther lady. So dey argyed

[1] From *Ol' Man Adam an' His Chillun*, published by Harper & Brothers; reprinted by permission of the author.

and fought to finally ole King Solomon yared de news and he sont for de ladies to appear before him.

Well, Solomon sot back on de throne and looked at de baby and den he looked at de ladies. And den he looked back at de baby again.

"Well," he said, "f'm de way things looks to me, y'all ladies ain't got no call to raise no ruckus 'bout dis young'n. Y'all is bofe what I'd call good-lookin' ladies, now ain't you?" So bofe de ladies kinder giggled back at Solomon. "Yeah," say ole King Solomon, "y'all is what I call a couple of right purty gals. And I jest be doggone efn I kin see how purty gals like y'all kin go to scrappin' about dis bald-haided little ole brat which looks like a peeled onion in de face."

So one er de ladies kinder grinned and say, "Yo' Majesty, he ain't so turrible much to look at, now, is he?" But de yuther lady jest sot back and simmered and b'iled.

"Well, what you got to say?" King Solomon ax de yuther lady.

"Yo' Majesty," say de yuther lady, "you is de king and long may you wave. But scusin' dat, you ain't nothin' but a fresh little ole country boy wid a crown on yo' haid and nothin' in hit. Somebody tole me you was smart, and I bet de Lawd done struck 'em down right now for lyin'. You may be de king, but I bet de fust time you meet up wid de Fool Killer I bet hit's gonter be a big funeral and another king, 'long 'bout dat time. You's settin' on de throne wid yo' robe of purple wropped about you, actin' high and mighty, but you ain't foolin' me. I knows po' white trash when I sees 'em. And when I looks at you, I sho kin see 'em."

"You don't like me much, does you?" say ole King Solomon.

"I don't like you a-tall," say de yuther lady. "You don't know nothin' 'bout kingin' and you don't know nothin' 'bout babies. And you don't know nothin' 'bout nothin'. Come yar tellin' me dat dis purty little baby look like a peeled onion! Humph! You may be de king, but you looks like a goggle-eyed bullfrog peepin' through de ice, to me."

"Woman," says King Solomon, "does you mean to say you thinks disyar baby is sho-'nuff purty?"

"I don't think nothin' 'bout hit," say de yuther woman. "I knows hit."

"Dat settle de argyment, den," say ole King Solomon. "Any lady

which kin stand flatfooted and say a nine-day-old baby is purty is bound to be de baby's maw. So take him and git."

And den ole King Solomon turn round and look at de yuther woman and say: "Looky yar, gal. What you mean by claimin' dat woman's baby? Don't you know hit's ag'in' de law to do dat? Hit look like to me you's tryin' to contempt my cou't."

"Naw, I ain't, Yo' Majesty," say de woman. "Hit jest seem like hit's gittin' to be de style dese days and times for ev'y lady to has a baby, and me, I'm so ugly I ain't even got me no husband yit."

"Who say you's ugly, gal?" say King Solomon.

"I said hit," say de lady.

"Well, I got purty good jedgment 'bout de womenfolks," say Solomon, "and I jedges you to be about de best-lookin' gal which is come into my cou't dis week. What's yo' name?"

"My name de Queen of Sheba," say de lady, "but most er my friends jest call me Sheba for shawt."

"Well, doggone my ole rusty hide!" say Solomon. "So you's Sheba, is you? I been yarin' 'bout how good-lookin' you is, and I be dog efn I don't believe hit now. Stand round dar in de light so My Majesty kin git a good look at you. Dad blame my skin! Gal, you's jest so purty you jest won't do!"

"You's kinder handsome yo' ownse'f, ole King Solomon," say de Queen of Sheba. "Most smart men like you is kinder ugly, but you sho ain't."

"Is dat a fack?" say King Solomon. So they sot dar and chinned awhile about de weather and de crops, and fust one thing and another, to finally they got to tawkin' 'bout how smart ole King Solomon was.

"I jest natchally can't he'p bein' smart," say ole King Solomon. "Hit was bawn in me, I reckon. Jest ax me a question, now, and see what I kin do to hit. I ain't braggin', onderstand, but jest ax me one."

"All right," say Sheba, "but I'm liable to make hit a purty hard one. Tell me who's de father er de Zebedee chilluns?"

"Old man Zebedee," say Solomon, quick as lightnin'.

"Doggone!" say Sheba. "You is a smart scound'el, ain't you, Yo' Majesty?"

"Ax me another question," say ole King Solomon. "I ain't braggin', but I'm brim-full er wisdom and I craves to scatter some about."

"All right," say Sheba. "How come hit wa'n't no seven-up games on de ark?"

" 'Cause ole Noah was settin' on de deck," say Solomon.

"Ain't you de smartest man!" say Sheba. "I ain't gonter ax you no more."

"Aw, come and ax me," say Solomon. "Ax me, woman."

"Well," say Sheba, "whar was Moses when de lights went out?"

"In de dark," say Solomon.

"All right, what did Adam and Eve do when Abel got kilt?" say Sheba.

"Raised Cain," say Solomon.

"You's too many for me, Yo' Majesty," say Sheba. "Any good-lookin' king wid all yo' brains in his haid is liable to change my mind. I better not ax you no more."

"Aw, come on, sugar, ax me one more," say Solomon.

"Naw suh!" say Sheba. "You got too many brains for a little ole country gal like me."

"Aw, come on, baby," say King Solomon. "Jest ax My Majesty one more."

"Well, I knows you got de answer to dis one," say Sheba, "but I'm gonter ax you hit, jest de same. Who is de smartest and de best-lookin' king in dis man's town?"

"He de king," say ole King Solomon, "which is settin' yar makin' his eyes at de purties' and smartes' queen in dis man's town or any yuther man's town, and he don't keer who knows hit."

So they sot around and tawked awhile, and finally ole King Solomon tuck and built a temple and when he died he had nine hund'ed and ninety-nine wives scattered 'bout de place.

THE HEYDAY OF THE BLOOD [1]

Dorothy Canfield

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

[Most grown-up people have the memory of at least one person whose philosophy of living has served as a spur to a fuller and more satisfactory life for themselves. When a crisis is to be met, one which if well met will open up a deeper channel through life, the vigor of some remembered philosophy gives them courage to face the crisis squarely. Professor Mallory, a genial old man, derived from the memory of his great-grandfather Pendleton such an all-embracing code of living. "Gran'ther," as he was called by his family, came to live with the Mallorys on their farm when his great-grandson, now a professor, was seven years old. Here in the town of Hillsboro, Vermont, eighty-eight-year old "Gran'ther" settled down and was persuaded to be an old man. He had been in the War of 1812 and lost an arm and much of his health by an attack of fever. But his ailments and his age had by no means broken his spirit. He would gloat on how he had now outlived six doctors who had each given him a year to live, "and," as he said, "the seventh is going downhill fast, so I hear!" His total disregard for his health, and his rebellious, unreasonable, whimsical nature were an electric element in the Mallorys' quiet, orderly life. "He insisted on going to every picnic and church social," Professor Mallory recalled, "where he ate recklessly of all the indigestibles he could lay his hands on, stood in drafts, tired himself to the verge of fainting away by playing games with the children, and returned home, exhausted, animated, and quite ready to pay the price of a day in bed, groaning and screaming out with pain as heartily and unaffectedly as he had laughed with the pretty girls the evening before."

The professor when a boy was so stirred by this old fellow's irresistible spirit that his whole life was influenced by it. One day

[1] Reprinted from *Hillsboro People* by Dorothy Canfield, with the permission of Henry Holt and Company.

when one of his young assistants who was nervous and fretful opened up and told his troubles—how he couldn't sleep, worried constantly, took no interest in life, doctors predicted a nervous breakdown—Professor Mallory sat back and in a cheerful, casual manner said, "You don't suppose those great friends of yours, the nerve specialists, would object to my telling you a story, do you?" The assistant looked interested. Then the Professor began to tell of one of his outstanding experiences with "Gran'ther" back in the days when he was a boy and was called "Jo." One August day "Gran'ther" announced his desire to go to the county fair, held some fourteen miles down the valley from the farm. Since the family was busy with haying and, furthermore, the family doctor had said such a trip and excitement would kill the old man, he was refused in tones of finality. "Gran'ther" said no more, but a few days later when the men-folks had gone haying and the women were off berrying, leaving the boy Mallory in care of his great-grandfather, the old fellow came to life and said, "We're goin' to go a skylarkin'! Little Jo Mallory is going to the county fair with his Gran'ther Pendleton, an' he's goin' to have more fun than ever was in the world, and he——." Jo protested, but "Gran'ther" in a whooping chant of scorn hitched up old Peggy and off they went, "Gran'ther" in a hickory shirt, with an old hat flapping over his wizened face, Jo bare-legged in ragged old clothes.]

Professor Mallory leaned back and laughed aloud at the vision he had been evoking—laughed with so joyous a relish in his reminiscences that the drawn, impatient face of his listener relaxed a little. He drew a long breath, he even smiled a little absently.

"Oh, that was a day!" went on the professor, still laughing and wiping his eyes. "Never will I have such another! At the entrance to the grounds gran'ther stopped me while he solemnly untied the knot in his empty sleeve. I don't know what kind of hairbrained vow he had tied up in it, but with the little ceremony disappeared every trace of restraint, and we plunged head over ears into the saturnalia of delights that was an old-time county fair.

"People had little cash in those days, and gran'ther's six dollars and forty-three cents lasted like the widow's cruse of oil. We went to see the fat lady, who, if she was really as big as she looked to

me then, must have weighed at least a ton. My admiration for gran'ther's daredevil qualities rose to infinity when he entered into free-and-easy talk with her, about how much she ate, and could she raise her arms enough to do up her own hair, and how many yards of velvet it took to make her gorgeous, gold-trimmed robe. She laughed a great deal at us, but she was evidently touched by his human interest, for she confided to him that it was not velvet at all, but furniture covering; and when we went away she pressed on us a bag of peanuts. She said she had more peanuts than she could eat —a state of unbridled opulence which fitted in for me with all the other superlatives of that day.

"We saw the dog-faced boy, whom we did not like at all; gran'ther expressing, with a candidly outspoken cynicism, his belief that 'them whiskers was glued to him.' We wandered about the stock exhibit, gazing at the monstrous oxen, and hanging over the railings where the prize pigs lived to scratch their backs. In order to miss nothing, we even conscientiously passed through the Woman's Building, where we were very much bored by the serried ranks of preserve jars.

"'Sufferin' Hezekiah!' cried gran'ther irritably. 'Who cares how gooseberry jell *looks?* If they'd give a felly a taste, now ——'

"This reminded him that we were hungry, and we went to a restaurant under a tent, where, after taking stock of the wealth that yet remained of gran'ther's hoard, he ordered the most expensive things on the bill of fare."

Professor Mallory suddenly laughed out again. "Perhaps in heaven, but certainly not until then, shall I ever taste anything so ambrosial as that fried chicken and coffee ice-cream! I have not lived in vain that I have such a memory back of me!"

This time the younger man laughed with the narrator, settling back in his chair as the professor went on:

"After lunch we rode on the merry-go-round, both of us, gran'ther clinging desperately with his one hand to his red camel's wooden hump, and crying out shrilly to me to be sure and not lose his cane. The merry-go-round had just come in at that time, and gran'ther had never experienced it before. After the first giddy flight we retired to a lemonade-stand to exchange impressions, and finding that we both alike had fallen completely under the spell of the new sensation, gran'ther said that we 'sh'd keep on a-ridin' till we'd had enough!

King Solomon couldn't tell when we'd ever git a chance again!' So we returned to the charge, and rode and rode and rode, through blinding clouds of happy excitement, so it seems to me now, such as I was never to know again. The sweat was pouring off from us, and we had tried all the different animals on the machine before we could tear ourselves away to follow the crowd to the race-track.

"We took reserved seats, which cost a quarter apiece, instead of the unshaded ten-cent benches, and gran'ther began at once to pour out to me a flood of horse-talk and knowing race-track aphorisms, which finally made a young fellow sitting next to us laugh superciliously. Gran'ther turned on him heatedly.

" 'I bet-che fifty cents I pick the winner in the next race!' he said sportily.

" 'Done!' said the other, still laughing.

"Gran'ther picked a big black mare, who came in almost last, but he did not flinch. As he paid over the half-dollar he said: 'Everybody's likely to make mistakes about *some* things; King Solomon was a fool in the head about womenfolks! I bet-che a dollar I pick the winner in *this* race!' and 'Done!' said the disagreeable young man, still laughing. I gasped, for I knew we had only eighty-seven cents left, but gran'ther shot me a command to silence out of the corner of his eyes, and announced that he bet on the sorrel gelding.

"If I live to be a hundred and break the bank at Monte Carlo three times a week," said Mallory, shaking his head reminiscently, "I could not know a tenth part of the frantic excitement of that race or of the mad triumph when our horse won. Gran'ther cast his hat upon the ground, screaming like a steam-calliope with exultation as the sorrel swept past the judges' stand ahead of all the others, and I jumped up and down in an agony of delight which was almost more than my little body could hold.

"After that we went away, feeling that the world could hold nothing more glorious. It was five o'clock, and we decided to start back. We paid for Peggy's dinner out of the dollar we had won on the race —I say 'we,' for by that time we were welded into one organism— and we still had a dollar and a quarter left. 'While ye're about it, always go the whole hog!' said gran'ther, and we spent twenty minutes in laying out that money in trinkets for all the folks at home. Then, dusty, penniless, laden with bundles, we bestowed our exhausted

bodies and our uplifted hearts in the old buckboard, and turned Peg's head toward the mountains. We did not talk much during that drive, and though I thought at the time only of the carnival of joy we had left, I can now recall every detail of the trip—how the sun sank behind Indian Mountain, a peak I had known before only through distant views; then, as we journeyed on, how the stars came out above Hemlock Mountain—our own home mountain behind our house, and later, how the fireflies filled the darkening meadows along the river below us, so that we seemed to be floating between the steady stars of heaven and their dancing, twinkling reflection in the valley.

"Gran'ther's dauntless spirit still surrounded me. I put out of mind doubts of our reception at home, and lost myself in delightful ruminatings on the splendors of the day. At first, every once in a while, gran'ther made a brief remark, such as, ' 'Twas the hind-quarters of the sorrel I bet on. He was the only one in the hull kit and bilin' of 'em that his quarters didn't fall away'; or, 'You needn't tell *me* that them Siamese twins ain't unpinned every night as separate as you and me!' But later on, as the damp evening air began to bring on his asthma, he subsided into silence, only broken by great gasping coughs.

"These were heard by the anxious, heart-sick watchers at home, and, as old Peg stumbled wearily up the hill, father came running down to meet us. 'Where you be'n?' he demanded, his face pale and stern in the light of his lantern. 'We be'n to the county fair!' croaked gran'ther with a last flare of triumph, and fell over sideways against me. Old Peg stopped short, hanging her head as if she, too, were at the limit of her strength. I was frightfully tired myself, and frozen with terror of what father would say. Gran'ther's collapse was the last straw. I began to cry loudly, but father ignored my distress with an indifference which cut me to the heart. He lifted gran'ther out of the buckboard, carrying the unconscious little old body into the house without a glance backward at me. But when I crawled down to the ground, sobbing and digging my fists into my eyes, I felt mother's arms close around me.

" 'Oh, poor, naughty little Joey!' she said. 'Mother's bad, dear little boy!' "

Professor Mallory stopped short.

"Perhaps that's something else I'll know again in heaven," he said

soberly, and waited a moment before he went on: "Well, that was the end of our day. I was so worn out that I fell asleep over my supper, in spite of the excitement in the house about sending for a doctor for gran'ther, who was, so one of my awe-struck sisters told me, having some kind of 'fits.' Mother must have put me to bed, for the next thing I remember, she was shaking me by the shoulder and saying, 'Wake up, Joey. Your great-grandfather wants to speak to you. He's been suffering terribly all night, and the doctor thinks he's dying.'

"I followed her into gran'ther's room, where the family was assembled about the bed. Gran'ther lay drawn up in a ball, groaning so dreadfully that I felt a chill like cold water at the roots of my hair; but a moment or two after I came in, all at once he gave a great sigh and relaxed, stretching out his legs and laying his arm down on the coverlid. He looked at me and attempted a smile.

" 'Well, it was wuth it, warn't it, Joey?' he said gallantly, and closed his eyes peacefully to sleep."

"Did he die?" asked the younger professor, leaning forward eagerly.

"Die? Gran'ther Pendleton? Not much! He came tottering down to breakfast the next morning, as white as an old ghost, with no voice left, his legs trembling under him, but he kept the whole family an hour and a half at the table, telling them in a loud whisper all about the fair, until father said really he would have to take us to the one next year. Afterward he sat out on the porch watching old Peg graze around the yard. I thought he was in one of his absent-minded fits, but when I came out, he called me to him, and, setting his lips to my ear, he whispered:

" 'An' the seventh is a-goin' down-hill fast, so I hear!' He chuckled to himself over this for some time, wagging his head feebly, and then he said: 'I tell ye, Joey, I've lived a long time, and I've larned a lot about the way folks is made. The trouble with most of 'em is, they're 'fraid-cats! As Jeroboam Warner used to say—he was in the same rigiment with me in 1812—the only way to manage this business of livin' is to give a whoop and let her rip! If ye just about half-live, ye just the same as half-die; and if ye spend yer time half-dyin', some day ye turn in and die all over, without rightly meanin' to at all—

just a kind o' bad habit ye've got yerself inter.' Gran'ther fell into a meditative silence for a moment. 'Jeroboam, he said that the evenin' before the battle of Lundy's Lane, and he got killed the next day. Some live, and some die; but folks that live all over die happy, anyhow! Now I tell you what's my motto, an' what I've lived to be eighty-eight on ——"

Professor Mallory stood up and, towering over the younger man, struck one hand into the other as he cried: "This was the motto he told me: 'Live while you live, and then die and be done with it!'"

MR. TRAVERS'S FIRST HUNT[1]

Richard Harding Davis

YOUNG TRAVERS, who had been engaged to a girl down on Long Island for the last three months, only met her father and brother a few weeks before the day set for the wedding. The brother is a master of hounds near Southampton, and shared the expense of importing a pack from England with Van Bibber. The father and son talked horse all day and until one in the morning; for they owned fast thoroughbreds, and entered them at the Sheepshead Bay and other race-tracks. Old Mr. Paddock, the father of the girl to whom Travers was engaged, had often said that when a young man asked him for his daughter's hand he would ask him in return, not if he had lived straight, but if he could ride straight. And on his answering this question in the affirmative depended his gaining her parent's consent. Travers had met Miss Paddock and her mother in Europe, while the men of the family were at home. He was invited to their place in the fall when the hunting season opened, and spent the evening most pleasantly and satisfactorily with his *fiancée* in a corner of the drawing-room. But as soon as the women had gone, young Paddock joined him and said, "You ride, of course?" Travers had never ridden; but he had been prompted how to answer by Miss

[1] Reprinted from *Van Bibber and Others* by permission of Harper & Brothers.

Paddock, and so said there was nothing he liked better. As he expressed it, he would rather ride than sleep.

"That's good," said Paddock. "I'll give you a mount on Satan to-morrow morning at the meet. He is a bit nasty at the start of the season; and ever since he killed Wallis, the second groom, last year, none of us care much to ride him. But you can manage him, no doubt. He'll just carry your weight."

Mr. Travers dreamed that night of taking large, desperate leaps into space on a wild horse that snorted forth flames, and that rose at solid stone walls as though they were hayricks.

He was tempted to say he was ill in the morning—which was, considering his state of mind, more or less true—but concluded that, as he would have to ride sooner or later during his visit, and that if he did break his neck it would be in a good cause, he determined to do his best. He did not want to ride at all, for two excellent reasons—first, because he wanted to live for Miss Paddock's sake, and, second, because he wanted to live for his own.

The next morning was a most forbidding and doleful-looking morning, and young Travers had great hopes that the meet would be declared off; but, just as he lay in doubt, the servant knocked at his door with his riding things and his hot water.

He came down-stairs looking very miserable indeed. Satan had been taken to the place where they were to meet, and Travers viewed him on his arrival there with a sickening sense of fear as he saw him pulling three grooms off their feet.

Travers decided that he would stay with his feet on solid earth just as long as he could, and when the hounds were thrown off and the rest had started at a gallop he waited, under the pretence of adjusting his gaiters, until they were all well away. Then he clenched his teeth, crammed his hat down over his ears, and scrambled up on to the saddle. His feet fell quite by accident into the stirrups, and the next instant he was off after the others, with an indistinct feeling that he was on a locomotive that was jumping the ties. Satan was in among and had passed the other horses in less than five minutes, and was so close on the hounds that the whippers-in gave a cry of warning. But Travers could as soon have pulled a boat back from going over the Niagara Falls as Satan, and it was only because the hounds were well ahead that saved them from having Satan

ride them down. Travers had taken hold of the saddle with his left hand to keep himself down, and sawed and swayed on the reins with his right. He shut his eyes whenever Satan jumped, and never knew how he happened to stick on; but he did stick on, and was so far ahead that no one could see in the misty morning just how badly he rode. As it was, for daring and speed he led the field, and not even young Paddock was near him from the start. There was a broad stream in front of him, and a hill just on its other side. No one had ever tried to take this at a jump. It was considered more of a swim than anything else, and the hunters always crossed it by the bridge, towards the left. Travers saw the bridge and tried to jerk Satan's head in that direction; but Satan kept right on as straight as an express train over the prairie. Fences and trees and furrows passed by and under Travers like a panorama run by electricity, and he only breathed by accident. They went on at the stream and the hill beyond as though they were riding at a stretch of turf, and, though the whole field set up a shout of warning and dismay, Travers could only gasp and shut his eyes. He remembered the fate of the second groom and shivered. Then the horse rose like a rocket, lifting Travers so high in the air that he thought Satan would never come down again; but he did come down, with his feet bunched, on the opposite side of the stream. The next instant he was up and over the hill, and had stopped panting in the very centre of the pack that were snarling and snapping around the fox. And then Travers showed that he was a thoroughbred, even though he could not ride, for he hastily fumbled for his cigar-case, and when the field came pounding up over the bridge and around the hill, they saw him seated nonchalantly on his saddle, puffing critically at a cigar and giving Satan patronizing pats on the head.

"My dear girl," said old Mr. Paddock to his daughter as they rode back, "if you love that young man of yours and want to keep him, make him promise to give up riding. A more reckless and more brilliant horseman I have never seen. He took that double jump at the gate and that stream like a centaur. But he will break his neck sooner or later, and he ought to be stopped." Young Paddock was so delighted with his prospective brother-in-law's great riding that that night in the smoking-room he made him a present of Satan before all the men.

"No," said Travers, gloomily, "I can't take him. Your sister has asked me to give up what is dearer to me than anything next to herself, and that is my riding. You see, she is absurdly anxious for my safety, and she has asked me to promise never to ride again, and I have given my word."

A chorus of sympathetic remonstrance rose from the men.

"Yes, I know," said Travers to her brother, "it is rough, but it just shows what sacrifices a man will make for the woman he loves."

THE REVOLT OF "MOTHER" [1]

Mary E. Wilkins Freeman

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

[Sarah Penn stood before her husband. She had called him into their little New England farmhouse, led the way to the kitchen, pointed to a chair and said, "Sit down, father, I've got somethin' I want to say to you." She stood before him, a small woman, short and straight-waisted like a child, in her brown cotton gown. She seemed calm and patient despite the serious cause she had to plead. Adoniram, her husband, was building a new barn. She had protested that a new house was needed more than a barn. He had stolidly gone on with his plans, turning her aside with, "I wish you'd go into the house, mother, an' 'tend to you own affairs." Now she was making her final appeal.]

Now, father, look here"—Sarah Penn had not sat down; she stood before her husband in the humble fashion of a Scripture woman—"I'm goin' to talk real plain to you; I never have sence I married you, but I'm goin' to now. I ain't never complained, an' I ain't goin' to complain now, but I'm goin' to talk plain. You see this room here, father; you look at it well. You see there ain't no

[1] Reprinted from *The Best Stories of Mary E. Wilkins*, with the permission of Harper & Brothers.

carpet on the floor, an' you see the paper is all dirty, an' droppin' off the walls. We ain't had no new paper on it for ten year, an' then I put it on myself, an' it didn't cost but ninepence a roll. You see this room, father; it's all the one I've had to work in an' eat in an' sit in sence we was married. There ain't another woman in the whole town whose husband ain't got half the means you have but what's got better. It's all the room Nanny's got to have her company in; an' there ain't one of her mates but what's got better, an' their fathers not so able as hers is. It's all the room she'll have to be married in. What would you have thought, father, if we had had our weddin' in a room no better than this? I was married in my mother's parlor, with a carpet on the floor, an' stuffed furniture, an' a mahogany card-table. An' this is all the room my daughter will have to be married in. Look here, father!"

Sarah Penn went across the room as though it were a tragic stage. She flung open a door and disclosed a tiny bedroom, only large enough for a bed and bureau, with a path between. "There, father," said she—"there's all the room I've had to sleep in forty year. All my children were born there—the two that died, an' the two that's livin'. I was sick with a fever there."

She stepped to another door and opened it. It led into the small, ill-lighted pantry. "Here," said she, "is all the buttery I've got—every place I've got for my dishes, to set away my victuals in, an' to keep my milk-pans in. Father, I've been takin' care of the milk of six cows in this place, an' now you're going to build a new barn, an' keep more cows, an' give me more to do in it."

She threw open another door. A narrow crooked flight of stairs wound upward from it. "There, father," said she, "I want you to look at the stairs that go up to them two unfinished chambers that are all the places our son an' daughter have had to sleep in all their lives. There ain't a prettier girl in town nor a more ladylike one than Nanny, an' that's the place she has to sleep in. It ain't so good as your horse's stall; it ain't so warm an' tight."

Sarah Penn went back and stood before her husband. "Now, father," said she, "I want to know if you think you're doin' right an' accordin' to what you profess. Here, when we was married, forty year ago, you promised me faithful that we should have a new house built in that lot over in the field before the year was out. You said you had

money enough, an' you wouldn't ask me to live in no such place as this. It is forty year now, an' you've been makin' more money, an' I've been savin' of it for you ever since, an' you ain't built no house yet. You've built sheds an' cow-houses an' one new barn, an' now you're goin' to build another. Father, I want to know if you think it's right. You're lodgin' your dumb beasts better than you are your own flesh an' blood. I want to know if you think it's right."

"I ain't got nothin' to say."

. . . . . .

The barn was all completed ready for use by the third week in July. Adoniram had planned to move his stock in on Wednesday; on Tuesday he received a letter which changed his plans. He came in with it early in the morning. "Sammy's been to the post-office," said he, "an' I've got a letter from Hiram." Hiram was Mrs. Penn's brother, who lived in Vermont.

"Well," said Mrs. Penn, "what does he say about the folks?"

"I guess they're all right. He says he thinks if I come up country right off there's a chance to buy jest the kind of a horse I want." He stared reflectively out of the window at the new barn.

Mrs. Penn was making pies. She went on clapping the rolling-pin into the crust, although she was very pale, and her heart beat loudly.

"I dun' know but what I'd better go," said Adoniram. "I hate to go off jest now, right in the midst of hayin', but the ten-acre lot's cut, an' I guess Rufus an' the others can git along without me three or four days. I can't get a horse round here to suit me, nohow, an' I've got to have another for all that wood-haulin' in the fall. I told Hiram to watch out, an' if he got wind of a good horse to let me know. I guess I'd better go."

"I'll get out your clean shirt an' collar," said Mrs. Penn calmly.

She laid out Adoniram's Sunday suit and his clean clothes on the bed in the little bedroom. She got his shaving-water and razor ready. At last she buttoned on his collar and fastened his black cravat.

Adoniram never wore his collar and cravat except on extra occasions. He held his head high, with a rasped dignity. When he was all ready, with his coat and hat brushed, and a lunch of pie and cheese in a paper bag, he hesitated on the threshold of the door. He looked at his wife, and his manner was defiantly apologetic. "*If* them

cows come to-day, Sammy can drive 'em into the new barn," said he; "an' when they bring the hay up, they can pitch it in there."

"Well," replied Mrs. Penn.

Adoniram set his shaven face ahead and started. When he had cleared the door-step, he turned and looked back with a kind of nervous solemnity. "I shall be back by Saturday if nothin' happens," said he.

"Do be careful, father," returned his wife.

She stood in the door with Nanny at her elbow and watched him out of sight. Her eyes had a strange, doubtful expression in them; her peaceful forehead was contracted. She went in, and about her baking again. Nanny sat sewing. Her wedding-day was drawing nearer, and she was getting pale and thin with her steady sewing. Her mother kept glancing at her.

"Have you got that pain in your side this mornin'?" she asked.

"A little."

Mrs. Penn's face, as she worked, changed, her perplexed forehead smoothed, her eyes were steady, her lips firmly set. She formed a maxim for herself, although incoherently with her unlettered thoughts. "Unsolicited opportunities are the guide-posts of the Lord to the new roads of life," she repeated in effect, and she made up her mind to her course of action.

"S'posin' I *had* wrote to Hiram," she muttered once, when she was in the pantry—"s'posin' I had wrote, an' asked him if he knew of any horse? But I didn't, an' father's goin' wa'n't none of my doin'. It looks like a providence." Her voice rang out quite loud at the last.

"What you talkin' about, mother?" called Nanny.

"Nothin'."

Mrs. Penn hurried her baking; at eleven o'clock it was all done. The load of hay from the west field came slowly down the cart track, and drew up at the new barn. Mrs. Penn ran out. "Stop!" she screamed—"stop!"

The men stopped and looked; Sammy upreared from the top of the load, and stared at his mother.

"Stop!" she cried out again. "Don't you put the hay in that barn; put it in the old one."

"Why, he said to put it in here," returned one of the hay-makers,

wonderingly. He was a young man, a neighbor's son, whom Adoniram hired by the year to help on the farm.

"Don't you put the hay in the new barn; there's room enough in the old one, ain't there?" said Mrs. Penn.

"Room enough," returned the hired man, in his thick, rustic tones. "Didn't need the new barn, nohow, far as room's concerned. Well, I s'pose he changed his mind." He took hold of the horses' bridles.

Mrs. Penn went back to the house. Soon the kitchen windows were darkened, and a fragrance like warm honey came into the room.

Nanny laid down her work. "I thought father wanted them to put the hay into the new barn?" she said, wonderingly.

"It's all right," replied her mother.

Sammy slid down from the load of hay, and came in to see if dinner was ready.

"I ain't goin' to get a regular dinner to-day, as long as father's gone," said his mother. "I've let the fire go out. You can have some bread an' milk an' pie. I thought we could get along." She set out some bowls of milk, some bread, and a pie on the kitchen table. "You'd better eat your dinner now," said she. "You might jest as well get through with it. I want you to help me afterward."

Nanny and Sammy stared at each other. There was something strange in their mother's manner. Mrs. Penn did not eat anything herself. She went into the pantry, and they heard her moving dishes while they ate. Presently she came out with a pile of plates. She got the clothes-basket out of the shed, and packed them in it. Nanny and Sammy watched. She brought out cups and saucers, and put them in with the plates.

"What you goin' to do, mother?" inquired Nanny, in a timid voice. A sense of something unusual made her tremble, as if it were a ghost. Sammy rolled his eyes over his pie.

"You'll see what I'm goin' to do," replied Mrs. Penn. "If you're through, Nanny, I want you to go up-stairs an' pack up your things; an' I want you, Sammy, to help me take down the bed in the bedroom."

"Oh, mother, what for?" gasped Nanny.

"You'll see."

During the next few hours a feat was performed by this simple,

pious New England mother which was equal in its way to Wolfe's storming of the Heights of Abraham. It took no more genius and audacity of bravery for Wolfe to cheer his wondering soldiers up those steep precipices, under the sleeping eyes of the enemy, than for Sarah Penn, at the head of her children, to move all their little household goods into the new barn while her husband was away.

Nanny and Sammy followed their mother's instructions without a murmur; indeed, they were overawed. There is a certain uncanny and superhuman quality about all such purely original undertakings as their mother's was to them. Nanny went back and forth with her light loads, and Sammy tugged with sober energy.

At five o'clock in the afternoon the little house in which the Penns had lived for forty years had emptied itself into the new barn.

Every builder builds somewhat for unknown purposes, and is in a measure a prophet. The architect of Adoniram Penn's barn, while he designed it for the comfort of four-footed animals, had planned better than he knew for the comfort of humans. Sarah Penn saw at a glance its possibilities. Those great box-stalls, with quilts hung before them, would make better bedrooms than the one she had occupied for forty years, and there was a tight carriage-room. The harness-room, with its chimney and shelves, would make a kitchen of her dreams. The great middle space would make a parlor, by-and-by, fit for a palace. Up stairs there was as much room as down. With partitions and windows, what a house would there be! Sarah looked at the row of stanchions before the allotted space for cows, and reflected that she would have her front entry there.

At six o'clock the stove was up in the harness-room, the kettle was boiling, and the table set for tea. It looked almost as home-like as the abandoned house across the yard had ever done. The young hired man milked, and Sarah directed him calmly to bring the milk to the new barn. He came gaping, dropping little blots of foam from the brimming pails on the grass. Before the next morning he had spread the story of Adoniram Penn's wife moving into the new barn all over the village. Men assembled in the store and talked it over, women with shawls over their heads scuttled into each other's houses before their work was done.

. . . . . .

When Adoniram's four new cows arrived, Sarah ordered three to be put in the old barn, the other in the house shed where the cooking-stove had stood. That added to the excitement. It was whispered that all four cows were domiciled in the house.

Towards sunset on Saturday, when Adoniram was expected home, there was a knot of men in the road near the new barn. The hired man had milked, but he still hung around the premises. Sarah Penn had supper all ready. There were brown-bread and baked beans and a custard pie; it was the supper that Adoniram loved on a Saturday night. She had on a clean calico, and she bore herself imperturbably. Nanny and Sammy kept close at her heels. Their eyes were large, and Nanny was full of nervous tremors. Still there was to them more pleasant excitement than anything else. An inborn confidence in their mother over their father asserted itself.

Sammy looked out of the harness-room window. "There he is," he announced, in an awed whisper. He and Nanny peeped around the casing. Mrs. Penn kept on about her work. The children watched Adoniram leave the new horse standing in the drive while he went to the house door. It was fastened. Then he went around to the shed. That door was seldom locked, even when the family was away. The thought how her father would be confronted by the cow flashed upon Nanny. There was a hysterical sob in her throat. Adoniram emerged from the shed and stood looking about in a dazed fashion. His lips moved; he was saying something, but they could not hear what it was. The hired man was peeping around a corner of the old barn, but nobody saw him.

Adoniram took the new horse by the bridle and led him across the yard to the new barn. Nanny and Sammy slunk close to their mother. The barn doors rolled back, and there stood Adoniram, with the long mild face of the great Canadian farm horse looking over his shoulder.

Nanny kept behind her mother, but Sammy stepped suddenly forward, and stood in front of her.

Adoniram stared at the group. "What on airth you all down here for?" said he. "What's the matter over to the house?"

"We've come here to live, father," said Sammy. His shrill voice quavered out bravely.

"What"—Adoniram sniffed—"what is it smells like cookin'?" said

he. He stepped forward and looked in the open door of the harness-room. Then he turned to his wife. His old bristling face was pale and frightened. "What on airth does this mean, mother?" he gasped.

"You come in here, father," said Sarah. She led the way into the harness-room and shut the door. "Now, father," said she, "you needn't be scared. I ain't crazy. There ain't nothin' to be upset over. But we've come here to live, an' we're goin' to live here. We've got jest as good a right here as new horses an' cows. The house wa'n't fit for us to live in any longer, an' I made up my mind I wa'n't goin' to stay there. I've done my duty by you forty year, an' I'm goin' to do it now; but I'm goin' to live here. You've got to put in some windows and partitions; an' you'll have to buy some furniture."

"Why, mother!" the old man gasped.

"You'd better take your coat off an' get washed—there's the wash-basin—an' then we'll have supper."

"Why, mother!"

Sammy went past the window, leading the new horse to the old barn. The old man saw him, and shook his head speechlessly. He tried to take off his coat, but his arms seemed to lack the power. His wife helped him. She poured some water into the tin basin, and put in a piece of soap. She got the comb and brush, and smoothed his thin gray hair after he had washed. Then she put the beans, hot bread, and tea on the table. Sammy came in, and the family drew up. Adoniram sat looking dazedly at his plate, and then waited.

"Ain't you goin' to ask a blessin', father?" said Sarah.

And the old man bent his head and mumbled.

All through the meal he stopped eating at intervals, and stared furtively at his wife; but he ate well. The home food tasted good to him, and his old frame was too sturdily healthy to be affected by his mind. But after supper he went out, and sat down on the step of the smaller door at the right of the barn, through which he had meant his Jerseys to pass in stately file, but which Sarah designed for her front house door, and he leaned his head on his hands.

After the supper dishes were cleared away and the milk-pans washed, Sarah went out to him. The twilight was deepening. There was a clear green glow in the sky. Before them stretched the smooth level of field; in the distance was a cluster of hay-stacks like the

huts of a village; the air was very cool and calm and sweet. The landscape might have been an ideal one of peace.

Sarah bent over and touched her husband on one of his thin, sinewy shoulders. "Father!"

The old man's shoulders heaved: he was weeping.

"Why, don't do so, father," said Sarah.

"I'll—put up the—partitions, an'—everything you—want, mother."

Sarah put her apron up to her face; she was overcome by her own triumph.

Adoniram was like a fortress whose walls had no active resistance, and went down the instant the right besieging tools were used. "Why, mother," he said, hoarsely, "I hadn't no idee you was so set on't as all this comes to."

AUTOBIOGRAPHY [1]

Zona Gale

A SWING under a fruit tree that seemed always in full bloom, some little dishes of pottery and a wooden doll—these gave me a happy childhood, at the hands of my parents, who were anxious but kind. I had a little schooling, not much, but then I worked in the mills and waited for the time to marry. That time came when I was nineteen and he was twenty-two, and we walked on the dike when the moon was big, and went to the fair with the others. We lived with my father and mother in the house where I was born, with the chard and melons of the garden meeting the creepers that grew over the front doorway.

We should never have left the old country for we had it fine there. He was a ticket-taker in the Broadstone station, a good job he had, but his brother kept writing to him that America was the place to be and to make money. I says to him, "You go then, and if you like it,

[1] From *Yellow Gentians and Blue*, reprinted by special permission of the author, and of the publisher, D. Appleton & Company, New York.

I'll follow." He was two years in America before he let on whether he liked it and then he didn't let on either, but he wrote to me to come over. It nearly killed me leaving my father and mother—for years I could see them as they looked when they said good-by—standing together on the flat stone, my father stiff and straight and my mother thinking the creepers covered up her crying.

We had but the one little girl and she just big enough to run to meet me. She had eyes that never stopped their smiling, and yellow hair and a way that made strangers remember. That little thing and I, we came away together. But the big vessel was like a prison and the little one was frightened of the rolling and the pitching and she couldn't taste the food. The fifth day out she sickened—we'd a doctor on board, too, but he didn't know that that sickness was three parts of fear and homesickness. The seventh day she died. That night they let me sit up beside her and the next day they came to take her away and I couldn't go up to see—I couldn't watch that thing they'd have to do. Then came a man of the ship who begged them to wait and he went down in the hold of the vessel and made a boatlike box, very small, and in that he laid my little one. Tender he was, like a woman. And he sealed her in, with narrow strips of the wood, and he made a sail of the sailcloth and fastened it on that strange boat. And when they'd let it down on to the water, they took me up to the deck. A little way off from the vessel it was by then—the tiny boat—rolling on the big waves, and it was sunset, so that the sail showed very white as the wind took it. I watched it till the sun went, till the dark came and the little white dot went out. Then I went below. All the night in my closed eyes I saw her in the sealed boat, on the big water, her that I had tended and watched, and I kept remembering how frightened she'd been of the rolling and pitching that was all the tending she had now. I couldn't stay in my berth and her out there, so I crept back up on deck again. And now the moon had come, and when I looked where I had left her, there was a sail in the far light—I know it was that sail I saw, and I watched till it died away again. Then I waited, looking toward where I knew it was, till the dawn came. When the dawn came there was only the gray water, empty.

He met me at the boat, and I was alone, and then I had to tell him. But while I told him I saw he had something to tell me. He looked

like a tramp—I had always seen him dressed as a ticket-taker or in his Sunday clothes. Now he was working as a day laborer at the wharf. He said: "God forgive me for bringing you over, but I couldn't face it any longer alone." I looked at him; I thought of my baby, dead of the voyage, and of my father and mother—so far away. But I looked at him, and I says, "Where do we live, my dear?" He took me to two high rooms with no light. I sat there with a stone in my throat. But I didn't let on.

I kept the two rooms tidy. I did all I could. The winters were hard, the summers were hard. In the fifteen years the four children came. In the fifty years since I have been in this country, they've grown to be men and women with homes to look after, and now they have grandchildren.

Sometimes, sitting here in the Home where my four children pay out money to keep me comfortable, I think about them in their homes, where of course they can't bother with me. I think of him, that worked himself to death long ago; and of my father and mother that I never saw again. And of her in the little sealed boat with the sail.

Life is like that for some of us—and yet we want to live, just like other folks.

THE WOMAN [1]

Zona Gale

WALKING one day in a suburb, Bellard, wearing clothes in the extreme of the fashion, was torn by the look of a house on whose mean little porch near the street sat a shabby man of sixty, without a coat, and reading a newspaper. The man's fate seemed terrible: the unpainted house, the disordered hall, the glimpse of a woman in an apron. But the man looked up, and smiled as brightly at Bellard as if he himself had been young.

[1] From *Yellow Gentians and Blue*, by special permission of the author, and of the publisher, D. Appleton & Company, New York.

Bellard meant to be a financier. Instead, he shortly endured his father's bankruptcy, left college, found uncongenial employment, observed the trick of a girl's eyes, married her and lived in a little flat.

But this girl had the quality of a flower. Bellard could not explain it, but she was silent and fragrant, and hopeful like a flower. Once in April when he saw a pot of lilies of the valley blooming on the pavement, he thought: "They're like Lucile. They're all doing their utmost." In her presence it was impossible to be discouraged. He would go home from work hating his office, his routine, his fellows, his street; but as soon as he entered the flat, there would be some breath of that air for which he saw other men dying. Her welcome, her abstraction, her silence, her confidences were all really heavenly. Bellard wondered at her, did not comprehend her, adored her. He worked hard, and went home on the subway with a sense of happiness.

He longed to give her beautiful things, but she said: "How did people get like that, my dear—to want expensive things and to have people look up to them? Isn't it foolish?" He wondered how she knew that, and he wished that he knew it himself.

Their two children were like all agreeable children, and Bellard and Lucile went through the reverence, anxiety and joy of their upbringing. And whether the moment yielded a torn frock or a hurt knee, croup or a moral crisis, Lucile seemed to put the event in its place and not to be overwhelmed by it. "She has a genius for being alive," Bellard thought.

As she grew older, she was not so beautiful, and he saw many women both beautiful and young. But when they chattered, pouted and coquetted, when they were cynical, bored, critical, or hilarious, he thought about Lucile and her silences, her fragrance, her hope. Hope of what? She knew that they would in all probability never have any more than they had now. When he asked her wistfully what kept her so happy she replied with an air of wonder: "You."

One day he overheard her talking about him with a friend. Lucile was saying: "Other men live in things and events and emotions and the future. But he seems to know that living is something else. . . ." "What else?" this friend interrupted curiously. And he heard Lucile say: "Well, of course every one knows, really. But he lives it too." "I'm not good enough for her," Bellard thought, and tried his best to prove that he was.

They went on like this for years; the children grew up, married, came home and patronized them. Then Bellard, who had established a little business, failed. His son tried to straighten things out, found it impossible, and assumed control, frankly berating his father. His daughter came home with her three children, and filled the flat with clamor and turbulence. This woman said: "Mother, sometimes I think it's your fault. You're so patient with him." "I'm glad he's out of that business," said Lucile absently. "He never liked it." Her exasperated daughter cried: "But what are you going to live on?" Bellard heard her say: "Your father was responsible for three of us for a quarter of a century you know, dear." At this Bellard rose on strong wings and felt himself still able to breast the morning and the night.

Lucile and Bellard moved to a suburb. There they rented a little house and Bellard went into a real estate office. All day he showed land and houses to men who wanted something better for less money. At night he went home and there was Lucile—less like a flower, but still silent, fragrant, hopeful. He said to her: "You'll never have anything more than you have now, Lucile, do you realize that?" She replied: "I don't want anything more to dust and take care of!" Once he said: "When you were a girl you dreamed that you'd have things different, didn't you, Lucile?" She said: "My dear, all that poor girl knew how to dream was just about having things!" He cried: "What do you want most of anything in this world?" She considered and answered: "I want you to be as happy as I am."

He thought of his own early dream of being a great financier, and said: "I'm the happy one, you know." He thought: "This is what the world is dying for."

One day, when he was sixty, he was sitting on his mean little porch near the street. The house was small and unpainted, the hall was disordered with house cleaning, Lucile in an apron was in the doorway. Bellard, without a coat and reading a newspaper, lifted his eyes, and saw walking by the house, and wearing clothes in the extreme of fashion, a youth who looked up at him with an excess of visible compassion.

On this youth Bellard looked down and smiled, a luminous smile, a smile as bright as if he himself had been young.

THE SOUL OF THE GREAT BELL[1]

Lafcadio Hearn

THE water-clock marks the hour in the *Ta-chung sz'*, in the Tower of the Great Bell: now the mallet is lifted to smite the lips of the metal monster—the vast lips inscribed with Buddhist texts from the sacred *Fa-hwa-King*, from the chapters of the holy *Ling-yen-King!* Hear the great bell responding!—how mighty her voice, though tongueless!—*KO-NGAI!* All the little dragons on the high-tilted eaves of the green roofs shiver to the tips of their gilded tails under that deep wave of sound; all the porcelain gargoyles tremble on their carven perches; all the hundred little bells of the pagodas quiver with desire to speak. *KO-NGAI*—all the green-and-gold tiles of the temple are vibrating; the wooden goldfish above them are writhing against the sky; the uplifted finger of Fo shakes high over the heads of the worshipers through the blue fog of incense! *KO-NGAI!*—What a thunder tone was that! All the lacquered goblins on the palace cornices wriggle their fire-colored tongues! And after each huge shock, how wondrous the multiple echo and the great golden moan, and, at last, the sudden sibilant sobbing in the ears when the immense tone faints away in broken whispers of silver, as though a woman should whisper, "*Hiai!*" Even so the great bell hath sounded every day for well-nigh five hundred years—*Ko-Ngai:* first with stupendous clang, then with immeasurable moan of gold, then with silver murmuring of "*Hiai!*" And there is not a child in all the many-colored ways of the old Chinese city who does not know the story of the great bell, who cannot tell you why the great bell says *Ko-Ngai* and *Hiai!*

Now, this is the story of the great bell in the *Ta-chung sz'*, as the same is related in the *Pe-Hiao-Tou-Choue*, written by the learned Yu-Pao-Tchen, of the City of Kwang-tchau-fu.

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Nearly five hundred years ago the Celestially August, the Son of Heaven, Yong-Lo, of the "Illustrious" or Ming dynasty, commanded the worthy official Kouan-Yu that he should have a bell made of such size that the sound thereof might be heard for one hundred *li*. And he further ordained that the voice of the bell should be strengthened with brass, and deepened with gold, and sweetened with silver; and that the face and the great lips of it should be graven with blessed sayings from the sacred books, and that it should be suspended in the centre of the imperial capital, to sound through all the many-colored ways of the City of Pe-King.

Therefore the worthy mandarin Kouan-Yu assembled the master-molders and the renowned bellsmiths of the empire, and all men of great repute and cunning in foundry work; and they measured the materials for the alloy, and treated them skilfully, and prepared the molds, the fires, the instruments, and the monstrous melting-pot for fusing the metal. And they labored exceedingly, like giants, neglecting only rest and sleep and the comforts of life; toiling both night and day in obedience to Kouan-Yu, and striving in all things to do the behest of the Son of Heaven.

But when the metal had been cast, and the earthen mold separated from the glowing casting, it was discovered that, despite their great labor and ceaseless care, the result was void of worth; for the metals had rebelled one against the other—the gold had scorned alliance with the brass, the silver would not mingle with the molten iron. Therefore the molds had to be once more prepared, and the fires rekindled, and the metal remelted, and all the work tediously and toilsomely repeated. The Son of Heaven heard and was angry, but spake nothing.

A second time the bell was cast, and the result was even worse. Still the metals obstinately refused to blend one with the other; and there was no uniformity in the bell, and the sides of it were cracked and fissured, and the lips of it were slagged and split asunder: so that all the labor had to be repeated even a third time, to the great dismay of Kouan-Yu. And when the Son of Heaven heard these things, he was angrier than before; and sent his messenger to Kouan-Yu with a letter, written upon lemon-colored silk and sealed with the seal of the dragon, containing these words:

"From the Mighty Yong-Lo, the Sublime Tait-Sung, the Celestial and August, whose reign is called 'Ming,' to Kouan-Yu the Fuh-yin: Twice thou hast betrayed the trust we have deigned graciously to place in thee; if thou fail a third time in fulfilling our command, thy head shall be severed from thy neck. Tremble, and obey!"

* * *

Now, Kouan-Yu had a daughter of dazzling loveliness whose name —Ko-Ngai—was ever in the mouths of poets, and whose heart was even more beautiful than her face. Ko-Ngai loved her father with such love that she had refused a hundred worthy suitors rather than make his home desolate by her absence; and when she had seen the awful yellow missive, sealed with the Dragon-Seal, she fainted away with fear for her father's sake. And when her senses and her strength returned to her, she could not rest or sleep for thinking of her parent's danger, until she had secretly sold some of her jewels, and with the money so obtained had hastened to an astrologer, and paid him a great price to advise her by what means her father might be saved from the peril impending over him. So the astrologer made observations of the heavens, and marked the aspect of the Silver Stream (which we call the Milky Way), and examined the signs of the Zodiac—the *Hwang-tao*, or Yellow Road—and consulted the table of the Five *Hin*, or Principles of the Universe, and the mystical books of the alchemists. And after a long silence, he made answer to her, saying: "Gold and brass will never meet in wedlock, silver and iron never will embrace, until the flesh of a maiden be melted in the crucible; until the blood of a virgin be mixed with the metals in their fusion." So Ko-Ngai returned home sorrowful at heart; but she kept secret all that she had heard, and told no one what she had done.

* * *

At last came the awful day when the third and last effort to cast the great bell was to be made; and Ko-Ngai, together with her waiting woman, accompanied her father to the foundry, and they took their places upon a platform overlooking the toiling of the molders and the lava of liquefied metal. All the workmen wrought at their

tasks in silence; there was no sound heard but the muttering of the fires. And the muttering deepened into a roar like the roar of typhoons approaching, and the blood-red lake of metal slowly brightened like the vermilion of a sunrise, and the vermilion was transmuted into a radiant glow of gold, and the gold whitened blindingly, like the silver face of a full moon. Then the workers ceased to feed the raving flame, and all fixed their eyes upon the eyes of Kouan-Yu; and Kouan-Yu prepared to give the signal to cast.

But ere ever he lifted his finger, a cry caused him to turn his head; and all heard the voice of Ko-Ngai sounding sharply sweet as a bird's song above the great thunder of the fires—"*For thy sake, O my father!*" And even as she cried, she leaped into the white flood of metal; and the lava of the furnace roared to receive her, and spattered monstrous flakes of flame to the roof, and burst over the verge of the earthen crater, and cast up a whirling fountain of many-colored fires, and subsided quakingly, with lightnings and with thunders and with mutterings.

Then the father of Ko-Ngai, wild with his grief, would have leaped in after her, but that strong men held him back and kept firm grasp upon him until he had fainted away, and they could bear him like one dead to his home. And the serving-woman of Ko-Ngai, dizzy and speechless for pain, stood before the furnace, still holding in her hands a shoe, a tiny, dainty shoe, with embroidery of pearls and flowers—the shoe of her beautiful mistress that was. For she had sought to grasp Ko-Ngai by the foot as she leaped, but had only been able to clutch the shoe, and the pretty shoe came off in her hand; and she continued to stare at it like one gone mad.

. . . . . .

But in spite of all these things, the command of the Celestial and August had to be obeyed, and the work of the molders to be finished, hopeless as the result might be. Yet the glow of the metal seemed purer and whiter than before; and there was no sign of the beautiful body that had been entombed therein. So the ponderous casting was made; and lo! when the metal had become cool, it was found that the bell was beautiful to look upon and perfect in form, and wonderful in color above all other bells. Nor was there any trace found of the body of Ko-Ngai; for it had been totally absorbed by the

precious alloy, and blended with the well-blended brass and gold, with the intermingling of the silver and the iron. And when they sounded the bell, its tones were found to be deeper and mellower and mightier than the tones of any other bell, reaching even beyond the distance of one hundred *li*, like a pealing of summer thunder; and yet also like some vast voice uttering a name, a woman's name, the name of Ko-Ngai.

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And still, between each mighty stroke there is a long low moaning heard; and ever the moaning ends with a sound of sobbing and of complaining, as though a weeping woman should murmur, "*Hiai!*" And still, when the people hear that great golden moan they keep silence, but when the sharp, sweet shuddering comes in the air, and the sobbing of "*Hiai!*" then, indeed, do all the Chinese mothers in all the many-colored ways of Pe-King whisper to their little ones: "*Listen! that is Ko-Ngai crying for her shoe! That is Ko-Ngai calling for her shoe!*"

WHEN THE NEUROSES BLOOM[1]

Weare Holbrook

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

MR. GALLUP hadn't wanted to be an uncle in the first place. It was, he felt, almost as much of a responsibility as being a parent.

But he persevered. He knew that uncles were supposed to be able to carve toy boats with their jackknives at a moment's notice and answer questions concerning the home life of birds, animals and insects. At the risk of amputating his fingers he practiced boat-carving,

[1] From *The New York Herald Tribune Magazine*, reprinted by permission of the author.

and managed—after considerable bloodshed and blasphemy—to transform a cigar box into a fairly plausible mudscow.

By the time his nephew was five years old Mr. Gallup was a seasoned uncle. He could smoke his pipe without choking and be elfin in a bluff, hearty way without feeling self-conscious.

And when the lad climbed up into his lap and said: "Tell me a story, Uncle Ned," Mr. Gallup was not unprepared. He had at least half a dozen stories in his repertory; they were long, tiresome stories, like "Jack and the Beanstalk" and "Goldilocks and the Three Bears."

"A story, eh?" said Mr. Gallup, taking his pipe from his mouth and gazing at his nephew with that kindly, quizzical expression which he had rehearsed in front of the mirror. "Very well, Chester, you shall have—Hm-m, let me see. . . . Once upon a time——"

And then, suddenly and unaccountably, Mr. Gallup experienced a slight attack of stage fright. For the life of him he could not remember a story. He felt like an after-dinner speaker who has been called upon too soon.

"Once upon a time——" Mr. Gallup repeated, and stopped. Little Chester waited patiently. "That makes twice upon a time," he reminded his uncle.

"——in the middle of a deep, dark forest," continued Mr. Gallup, mopping his brow, "lived—um-ah—who do you think?"

"Peter Rabbit," suggested little Chester.

"That's it," declared Mr. Gallup triumphantly. "Peter Rabbit! Well, sir, one day Peter Rabbit called to his mother and said: 'Oh, mama, see what I found in the yard!' So Mrs. Rabbit came running out of the house and, sure enough, there was something in the yard! Now, what do you suppose it was?"

"One of those damn carrots," replied little Chester.

"A carrot," Mr. Gallup conceded promptly. "Yes, sir, a great big yellow carrot with a lovely green top. And where do you think that carrot came from?"

"It came from Farmer Brown's garden," responded Chester, with just a shade of impatience. "Listen, Uncle Ned, who is supposed to be telling this story, you or me?"

When the end of the story had been reached Mr. Gallup heaved a

sigh of relief. "Well," he said, patting his nephew on the back, "what do you think of that, eh?"

Little Chester was silent. "I think Peter Rabbit had a mother fixation," he said presently.

"A what?" gasped Mr. Gallup.

"He subconsciously identified Farmer Brown with his mother, who had made him eat carrots when he was a baby. And that was why he couldn't help eating the carrots in Farmer Brown's garden," little Chester explained. "You see, Uncle Ned, he was a paranoic, like Jack the Giant Killer."

"Like Jack the Giant Killer?" echoed Mr. Gallup feebly.

"Yes. Jack had a pronounced psychosis. Of course, he didn't really kill those giants. But his delusions of grandeur were so powerful that he was able to convince himself and the entire village that he had done so."

Mr. Gallup lifted little Chester from his lap and set him on the floor. "Excuse me," he said grimly. "I want to have a few words with your mother."

When he told his sister what her small son had said she took it calmly. "He probably picked it up from the psychiatrists," she explained. "You know, we are raising him scientifically, with especial emphasis upon mental hygiene. The house has been full of psychiatrists and child-psychologists ever since Chester was born. When he was only eleven days old they began giving him tests—just simple little tests, such as tickling the soles of his feet with a feather every half hour, and flashing colored lights in his eyes."

"What for?" inquired Mr. Gallup.

"To form his life pattern. You see, all the results of all tests for the last five years have been classified and summarized and their norm constitutes Chester's life pattern. By consulting a chart we can find out beforehand just what he will do in any given circumstances. It's a great convenience."

"Doesn't he ever fool you and do something unexpected?" Mr. Gallup asked.

"Occasionally he does," she admitted. "For instance, the other day he put a tack on grandpa's chair and grandpa sat down on it. Now, there is nothing in Chester's life pattern about putting tacks on chairs, and we were very much surprised—especially grandpa. But Chester

explained that he was merely studying grandpa's reaction to tactile stimuli. . . . I really believe the child is going to be a psychiatrist himself when he grows up. Yesterday I caught him pulling off the wings of flies, and doing it so earnestly that it reminded me of Professor Diffenderfer-Oomplatz, of Vienna."

"Can't something be done about it?" ventured Mr. Gallup anxiously.

"We hate to discourage him, because it would disarrange his life pattern. . . . But I must warn you not to cross your legs while Chester is around; the little darling has a perfect mania for testing people's knee-jerks, and sometimes he rather overdoes it. Last week when the Rev. Mr. Maulsby came to call, Chester cracked him across the shins with a baseball bat. Of course, Reverend Maulsby was awfully sporting about it and tried to laugh it off; but his laughter was a bit hysterical, and I doubt whether he will ever again feel quite the same toward Chester."

After his encounter with his nephew Mr. Gallup was a sadder, wiser uncle. He went home and immediately launched into a study of the new psychology. He read Freud and Jung and Dorsey and Watson in an effort to understand little Chester better. It seemed to be the only way that he could establish a mental contact with the younger generation.

And the next time little Chester said: "Tell me a story, Uncle Ned," Mr. Gallup was able to speak the lad's own language. "Very well," he said promptly, "what story?"

"Tell me about Red Riding Hood," suggested Chester.

"Ah, yes. Miss H." Mr. Gallup took off his eyeglasses, frowned and nodded. "A remarkable case of schizophrenia. Over-compensation in the form of day-dreams and persecutory ideas. H. was the daughter of a peasant residing near V—. Home primitive, but comfortable. Environment wholesome. Family history shows no hereditary taint, although one brother is said to have played a saxophone.

"The neurosis from which H. suffered reached its crux one Sunday afternoon," Mr. Gallup continued, "when she was ordered to take a basket of fruit to her grandmother, who was ill. In order to reach her grandmother's cottage it was necessary for her to walk through a dense forest.

"This H. did, but with great reluctance, for she imagined that there

were wild animals in this forest, waiting to devour her. The persecutory idea was so strong that by the time she arrived at her grandmother's cottage she had a definite paranoid psychosis which caused her to identify her grandmother with a large, ferocious wolf. She even commented upon the length and sharpness of her grandmother's teeth, although the old lady had no teeth whatever."

Mr. Gallup paused for a moment to heighten the suspense of his story. But the dramatic effect was lost on little Chester; he was fidgeting in his chair and gazing out of the window.

"Er—shall I go on?" asked Mr. Gallup.

"Oh, yes, by all means," said little Chester. "It's a very interesting case." But his voice lacked enthusiasm, and his manner was inattentive. A warm breeze swung the curtains apart; a wedge of sunshine pushed across the room. There was a shrill whistle outside the window, and the leathery *plunk* of a baseball landing in a mitt.

"What was that?" asked Mr. Gallup. "Another auditory hallucination?"

"No," replied his nephew wistfully; "that's Tubby Mifflin and Red Hershey and Snooty Wells. They're playing one ol' cat."

"I see," said Mr. Gallup.

"Their I. Q. is pretty low," continued Chester, "and the psychologists say I shouldn't associate with them. Red is only a high-grade moron, but he has a peach of a round-house curve, and Snooty can field like old Tris Speaker himself; he just picks 'em right out of the air."

Mr. Gallup nodded. "Perhaps you'd like to go out and study their reflexes," he suggested.

"May I?" cried Chester, jumping from his chair. "You won't tell on me?"

"No, indeed," said Mr. Gallup. "After all, if you intend to be a psychiatrist you must study all types of intelligence. The moron the merrier."

"Atty ol' pepper!" shouted Chester, as he dashed out of the house with a whoop of joy. "Batter up! Let's go!"

Mr. Gallup smiled fondly and shook his head. "Despite the best efforts of the psychologists," he mused, "boys will be boys—and not guinea pigs."

THE ART OF ANGLING [1]

Jerome K. Jerome

IF EVER you have an evening to spare, up the river, I should advise you to drop into one of the little village inns, and take a seat in the taproom. You will be nearly sure to meet one or two old rodmen, sipping their toddy there, and they will tell you enough fishy stories, in half an hour, to give you indigestion for a month.

George and I—I don't know what had become of Harris; he had gone out and had a shave, early in the afternoon, and had then come back and spent full forty minutes in pipe-claying his shoes; we had not seen him since—George and I, therefore, and the dog, left to ourselves, went for a walk to Wallingford on the second evening, and, coming home, we called in at a little riverside inn, for a rest, and other things.

We went into the parlour and sat down. There was an old fellow there, smoking a long clay pipe, and we naturally began chatting.

He told us that it had been a fine day to-day, and we told him that it had been a fine day yesterday, and then we all told each other that we thought it would be a fine day to-morrow; and George said the crops seemed to be coming up nicely.

After that it came out, somehow or other, that we were strangers in the neighbourhood, and that we were going away next morning.

Then a pause ensued in the conversation, during which our eyes wandered round the room. They finally rested upon a dusty old glass case, fixed very high up above the chimney-piece, and containing a trout. It rather fascinated me, that trout; it was such a monstrous fish. In fact, at first glance, I thought it was a cod.

"Ah!" said the old gentleman, following the direction of my gaze, "fine fellow that, ain't he?"

"Quite uncommon," I murmured; and George asked the old fellow how much he thought it weighed.

"Eighteen pounds six ounces," said our friend, rising and taking

[1] From *Three Men in a Boat.*

down his coat. "Yes," he continued, "it wur sixteen year ago, come the third o' next month, that I landed him. I caught him just below the bridge with a minnow. They told me he wur in the river, and I said I'd have him, and so I did. You don't see many fish that size about here now, I'm thinking. Good-night, gentlemen, good-night."

And out he went, and left us alone.

We could not take our eyes off the fish after that. It really was a remarkably fine fish. We were still looking at it, when the local carrier, who had just stopped at the inn, came to the door of the room with a pot of beer in his hand, and he also looked at the fish.

"Good-sized trout, that," said George, turning round to him.

"Ah! you may well say that, sir," replied the man; and then, after a pull at his beer, he added, "Maybe you wasn't here, sir, when that fish was caught?"

"No," we told him. We were strangers in the neighbourhood.

"Ah!" said the carrier, "then, of course, how should you? It was nearly five years ago that I caught that trout."

"Oh! was it you who caught it, then?" said I.

"Yes, sir," replied the genial old fellow. "I caught him just below the lock—leastways, what was the lock then—one Friday afternoon; and the remarkable thing about it is that I caught him with a fly. I'd gone out pike-fishing, bless you, never thinking of a trout, and when I saw that whopper on the end of my line, blest if it didn't quite take me aback. Well, you see, he weighed twenty-six pound. Good-night, gentlemen, good-night."

Five minutes afterwards a third man came in, and described how *he* had caught it early one morning, with bleak; and then he left; and a stolid, solemn-looking, middle-aged individual came in, and sat down over by the window.

None of us spoke for a while; but, at length, George turned to the new-comer and said—

"I beg your pardon, I hope you'll forgive the liberty that we—perfect strangers in the neighbourhood—are taking, but my friend here and myself would be so much obliged if you would tell us how you caught that trout up there."

"Why, who told you I caught that trout?" was the surprised query.

We said that nobody had told us so, but somehow or other we felt instinctively that it was he who had done it.

"Well, it's a most remarkable thing—most remarkable," answered the stolid stranger, laughing; "because, as a matter of fact, you are quite right. I did catch it. But fancy your guessing it like that! Dear me, it's really a most remarkable thing."

And then he went on, and told us how it had taken him half an hour to land it, and how it had broken his rod. He said he had weighed it carefully when he reached home, and it had turned the scale at thirty-four pounds.

He went in his turn, and when he was gone the landlord came in to us. We told him the various histories we had heard about his trout, and he was immensely amused, and we all laughed very heartily.

"Fancy Jim Bates and Joe Muggles and Mr. Jones and old Billy Maunders all telling you that they had caught it. Ha! ha! ha! Well, that is good," said the honest old fellow, laughing heartily. "Yes, they are the sort to give it *me*, to put up in *my* parlour, if *they* had caught it, they are! Ha! ha! ha!"

And then he told us the real history of the fish. It seemed that he had caught it himself, years ago, when he was quite a lad; not by any art or skill, but by that unaccountable luck that appears to always wait upon a boy when he plays the wag from school, and goes out fishing on a sunny afternoon, with a bit of string tied on to the end of a tree.

He said that bringing home that trout had saved him from a whacking, and that even his schoolmaster had said it was worth the rule-of-three and practice put together.

He was called out of the room at this point, and George and I again turned our gaze upon the fish.

It really was a most astonishing trout. The more we looked at it, the more we marvelled at it.

It excited George so much that he climbed up on the back of a chair to get a better view of it.

And then the chair slipped, and George clutched wildly at the trout-case to save himself, and down it came with a crash, George and the chair on the top of it.

"You haven't injured the fish, have you?" I cried in alarm, rushing up.

"I hope not," said George, rising cautiously and looking about.

But he had. That trout lay shattered into a thousand fragments—

I say a thousand, but there may have only been nine hundred. I did not count them.

We thought it strange and unaccountable that a stuffed trout should break up into little pieces like that.

And so it would have been strange and unaccountable, if it had been a stuffed trout, but it was not.

That trout was plaster-of-Paris.

BAD NEWS [1]

Hugh McNair Kahler

DEATH came into the sorry little store, death disguised as a small, neat man in a plush-collared overcoat and a prim gray hat. Through rimless eyeglasses a pale gaze, troubled and reproachful, told Mr. Bigby that the time had come to abandon hope.

"We didn't get that check," said the precise voice. To Mr. Bigby it was not the jobber's collector who spoke, but a black-robed judge, grave and terrible, and what he said was: "Stand up, James Bigby. Have you anything to say before sentence is pronounced upon you?"

Mr. Bigby tried to straighten his bowed, narrow shoulders.

"No," he said. "I didn't get around to it, but ——"

"You got four-hundred-odd from Halloran on Tuesday," said the collector. "You were acting as our agent in that deal. If you kept the money, I'm afraid ——"

Mr. Bigby moved hands and shoulders in a hopeless gesture.

"I kept it," he said. "I'll make it good to your firm, Mr. McDeed, if they'll give me time to turn around, but I had to use it right then."

"I'm sorry," McDeed clicked tongue and teeth. "If the money isn't in the first mail tomorrow the firm'll swear out a warrant. I came around on my way home to tell you because I hate to see you finish this way. Can't you raise it somehow, tonight, and ——"

Bigby shook his head. "I couldn't raise fifty, Mr. McDeed. I guess

[1] By permission of the author.

you'll have to go ahead. I don't blame your firm. They've been pretty white to me."

McDeed hesitated. His lean, prim face became almost friendly.

"How about your boy?" he asked. "Where is he? Can't he do anything?"

"Ernie isn't in this." Mr. Bigby spoke roughly. "It's my business. Leave him out of it."

The rebuff did not silence McDeed. "Bigby, we've known each other quite a while. I've kept my mouth shut while I watched you bleeding your business to death, but I'm not going to see you go to state's prison if I can help it. You sent Halloran's money to Ernie. Maybe he hasn't spent it yet. Get hold of him tonight and tell him how things stand. If you can get it back, or even part of it, the firm might ——"

"Ernie isn't in this," said Bigby.

"He is," said McDeed. "He's your son. If you go to the pen it's bound to affect him. And there's no use trying to pretend to me that he isn't the reason why you're going there. If you hadn't been robbing your business for three years and more, this wouldn't have happened. You had a first-rate trade here: you'd have it now if you gave yourself a chance—if you got in some new stock, smartened up the place a bit, had a man to help you. You've murdered a decent little concern to get money for Ernie, and now you're going to jail for the same reason. Don't do it, Bigby. Get hold of the boy tonight and tell him ——"

"No!" Bigby spoke harshly. McDeed's face darkened.

"Any boy that would let his father do this for him isn't worth ——"

"D'you think Ernie knows?" Bigby laughed. "I guess not! I've had to do some pretty tall lying to stand you off, all this while, but it's nothing compared to the way I've had to lie to Ernie! They don't come any better, McDeed. I'm through, all right; I'm a failure and you're going to jail me tomorrow, but I've got one thing nobody can take away—I've raised a mighty fine boy and put him through the best college there is! That's where the money's gone, McDeed! That Halloran check helped to pay Ernie's college bill. I stole it, maybe. Well, I'd have done more than steal, if I'd had to, sooner than take Ernie out of school now! I don't care about anything else, but before I'd have Ernie's chance spoiled I'd—I'd ——"

He stopped. When you were going to do what James Bigby would surely do before tomorrow, you didn't put it into words.

"How about Ernie?" suggested McDeed. "How do you think he's going to look at it when he finds out?"

"He's going to hate it, of course. But that doesn't matter. He can't help himself. He can't help being what I've made him, knowing what he's learned—and that's all that counts. I'm whipped, all right, but I've got the only thing I wanted and nobody can take it away from me!"

"Do you think he'll stay in college and graduate, when he knows about you? He's got almost a year ahead of him. How ——"

"He'll go through! I've fixed that. He'll have to." Bigby laughed shortly. "I've failed at everything else, but not this job, McDeed. And this is all I care about."

He was eager, now, to be rid of McDeed. He came out from behind the counter and moved the door, holding it open while the prim little man tried to maintain the argument; he almost pushed him outside, shutting the door in the middle of a sentence.

Then he took one of his store letterheads and wrote to Ernie. It was queerly easy to find the words:

I'm doing this because it's the only way to make sure you'll go through with college and what comes afterward. I guess it ought to show you how much I want you to do it. But don't get the notion that I'm doing it on account of you. I'm doing it for myself. It's the only thing I want, and I want it so bad that I'd do this twice over to be sure of getting it. Don't waste any time feeling bad about it. I'm not sorry for myself—I'm feeling grand, Ernie; I'm winning, and it's a great feeling. I'm not afraid you'll cheat me out of it, and nobody else can.

He sealed and addressed an envelope. Beside it on the littered desk he laid a life-insurance policy. Three thousand dollars would be plenty to see Ernie through, and that suicide clause didn't count, now that the policy had been in force three years. He filled his lungs, the sense of triumph still strong and hot within him.

He went out to the darkened store and fumbled in a cabinet behind the counter. Revolvers didn't always do their job but you could put a lot of faith in a shotgun. Two barrels . . . buckshot. . . .

The triumphant glow was with him when he came into the office.

He wasn't afraid, as he sat down, the loaded gun upright between his knees. Only as he ordered his hand to reach downward to the triggers did doubt come to him, doubt and fear. His arm wouldn't obey him. He was suddenly cold and frightened and sorry.

The rebellious scorn of the little store, the hatred he had felt toward his helpless slavery to it, these were gone. He discovered a kind of affection for the dusty row of bill-files on the shelf, the desk, the books at his elbow.

A good little business. Even now, with a bit of cash and somebody to help, it would pay. He and Ernie could get a comfortable living out of it; if he hadn't been so desperately set on making a gentleman out of Ernie they might have had a pretty good time together. Even now, if—no, too late to think about that. Tomorrow, if the police found James Bigby alive, it would all be wasted. Ernie'd have to quit college, see his father go to jail, the business would be gone and Ernie'd have to hunt a cheap, mean job instead of running a store of his own. Only one way out, now—only one way ——

Somebody shook the shop door just as James Bigby's unwilling arm stretched slowly downward. He hesitated. Better wait. If that late customer heard a shot he might break in, fetch a doctor in time to keep Bigby alive. Better wait till he gave it up and went away.

But the rattling persisted. James Bigby yielded to a queer sentimental impulse. It would be like saying good-by to the store, telling it he was sorry, if he waited on one late customer, dropped a few final dimes into the cash drawer. He stood the gun in a corner, covered the papers on the desk, went out to the door.

"Ernie!" His voice was like a frog's croak. "Ernie! What you doing here?"

The boy came past him into the darkened shop without answering.

"You've got to know." Ernie spoke doggedly. "I'd sooner tell you myself, although I'd rather be shot, after all you've done. I'm fired. Flunked the mid-term tests. Can't even go back next year. I'm too dumb, the dean says." He laughed shortly. "I found that out a long way back. I knew I wasn't cut for college, but you—well, I saw how you felt about it, and I did my darnedest to make good for you. But all along I'd rather have been right here, helping you with the store."

He produced a folded check. "I made 'em give me back a rebate on the bill. I'm dumb, all right, but not dumb enough to let 'em keep

your money without earning it. There's five hundred and six bucks here. Of course I know it won't make you feel any better—I know this'll just about kill you, but ——"

James Bigby heard himself laughing softly. His fingers closed on the check.

"It won't kill me, Ernie," he said. "I don't feel as bad about it as you might think either. Honest, Ernie, some ways, I'm—I'm kind of glad."

A CHRISTMAS PRESENT FOR A LADY[1]

Myra Kelly

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

IT WAS the week before Christmas, and the First-Reader Class had, almost to a man, decided on the gifts to be lavished on "Teacher." She was quite unprepared for any such observance on the part of her small adherents, for her first study of the roll-book had shown her that its numerous Jacobs, Isidores, and Rachels belonged to a class to which Christmas Day was much as other days. And so she went serenely on her way, all unconscious of the swift and strict relation between her manner and her chances. She was, for instance, the only person in the room who did not know that her criticism of Isidore Belchatosky's hands and face cost her a tall "three for ten cents" candlestick and a plump box of candy.

But Morris Mogilewsky, whose love for Teacher was far greater than the combined loves of all the other children, had as yet no present to bestow. That his "kind feeling" should be without proof when the lesser loves of Isidore Wishnewsky, Sadie Gonorowsky, and Bertha Binderwitz were taking the tangible but surprising forms which were daily exhibited to his confidential gaze, was more than he could bear. The knowledge saddened all his hours and was the

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more maddening because it could in no wise be shared by Teacher, who noticed his altered bearing and tried with all sorts of artful beguilements to make him happy and at ease. But her efforts served only to increase his unhappiness and his love. And he loved her! Oh, how he loved her! Since first his dreading eyes had clung for a breath's space to her "like man's shoes" and had then crept timidly upward past a black skirt, a "from silk" apron, a red "jumper," and "from gold" chain to her "light face," she had been mistress of his heart of hearts. That was more than three months ago. And well he remembered the day!

His mother had washed him horribly, and had taken him into the big, red schoolhouse, so familiar from the outside, but so full of unknown terrors within. After his dusty little shoes had stumbled over the threshold he had passed from ordeal to ordeal until at last he was torn in mute and white-faced despair from his mother's skirts. His spirit was quite broken and his nerves were all unstrung when he was pushed into a room full of bright sunshine and of children who laughed at his frightened little face. The sunshine smote his timid eyes, the laughter smote his timid heart, and he turned to flee. But the door was shut, and despair took him for its own.

Down upon the floor he dropped, and wailed, and wept, and kicked. It was then that he heard, for the first time, the voice which now he loved. A hand was forced between his aching body and the floor, and the voice said:

"Why, my dear little chap, you mustn't cry like that. What's the matter?"

The hand was gentle and the question kind, and these, combined with a faint perfume suggestive of drug stores and barber shops—but nicer than either—made him uncover his hot little face. Kneeling beside him was a lady, and he forced his eyes to that perilous ascent; from shoes to skirt, from skirt to jumper, from jumper to face, they trailed in dread uncertainty, but at the face they stopped. They had found—rest.

. . . . . .

So, having cast his troubles on the shoulders of the lady, he had added his throbbing head to the burden, and from that safe retreat had enjoyed his first day at school immensely.

Thereafter he had been the first to arrive every morning, and the

last to leave every afternoon; and under the care of Teacher, his liege lady, he had grown in wisdom and love and happiness. But the greatest of these was love. And now, when the other boys and girls were planning surprises and gifts of price for Teacher, his hands were as empty as his heart was full. Appeal to his mother met with denial prompt and energetic.

"For what you go and make, over Christmas, presents? You ain't no Krisht; you should better have no kind feelings over Krishts, neither; your papa could to have a mad."

"Teacher ain't no Krisht," said Morris stoutly; "all the other fellows buys her presents, and I'm loving mit her, too; it's polite I gives her presents the while I'm got such a kind feeling over her."

"Well, we ain't got no money for buy nothings," said Mrs. Mogilewsky sadly. "No money, und your papa, he has all times a scare he shouldn't to get no more, the while the boss"—and here followed incomprehensible but depressing financial details. So Morris was helpless, his mother poor, and Teacher all unknowing.

And the great day, the Friday before Christmas came, and the school was, for the first half hour, quite mad. Doors opened suddenly and softly to admit small persons, clad in wondrous ways and bearing wondrous parcels. Room 18, generally so placid and so peaceful, was a howling wilderness full of brightly coloured, quickly changing groups of children, all whispering, all gurgling, and all hiding queer bundles. A newcomer invariably caused a diversion; the assembled multitude, athirst for novelty, fell upon him and clamoured for a glimpse of his bundle and a statement of its price.

Teacher watched in dumb amaze. What could be the matter with the children, she wondered. They could not have guessed the shrouded something in the corner to be a Christmas-tree. What made them behave so queerly, and why did they look so strange? They seemed to have grown stout in a single night, and Teacher, as she noted this, marveled greatly. The explanation was simple; in nearly all cases the glory of holiday attire was hung upon the solid foundation of everyday clothes as bunting is hung upon a building.

Teacher, too, was more beautiful than ever. Her dress was blue, and "very long down, like a lady," with bands of silk and scraps of lace distributed with the eye of art.

Isidore Belchatosky, relenting, was the first to lay tribute before

Teacher. He came forward with a sweet smile and a tall candlestick—the candy had gone to its long home—and Teacher, for a moment, could not be made to understand that all that length of bluish-white china was really hers "for keeps."

"It's tomorrow holiday," Isidore assured her; "and we gives you presents, the while we have a kind feeling. Candlesticks could to cost twenty-five cents."

"It's a lie. Three for ten," said a voice in the background, but Teacher hastened to respond to Isidore's test of her credulity:

"Indeed they could. This candlestick could have cost fifty cents, and it's just what I want. It is very good of you to bring me a present."

"You're welcome," said Isidore, retiring; and then, the ice being broken, the First-Reader Class in a body rose to cast its gifts on Teacher's desk, and its arms around Teacher's neck.

Nathan Horowitz presented a small cup and saucer; Isidore Applebaum bestowed a large calendar for the year before last; Sadie Gonorowsky brought a basket containing a bottle of perfume, a thimble, and a bright silk handkerchief; Sarah Schrodsky offered a pen-wiper and a yellow celluloid collar-button, and Eva Kidansky gave an elaborate nasal douche, under the pleasing delusion that it was an atomizer.

Once more sounds of grief reached Teacher's ears. Rushing again to the rescue, she threw open the door and came upon Woe personified. Eva Gonorowsky, her hair in wildest disarray, her stocking fouled, ungartered, appeared before her teacher. She bore all the marks of Hamlet's excitement, and many more, including a tear-stained little face and a gilt saucer clasped to a panting breast.

"Eva, my dearest Eva, what's happened to you *now*?" asked Teacher, for the list of ill-chances which had befallen this one of her charges was very long. And Eva's wail was that a boy, a very big boy, had stolen her golden cup "what I had for you by present," and had left her only the saucer and her undying love to bestow.

Before Eva's sobs had quite yielded to Teacher's arts, Jacob Spitsky pressed forward with a tortoise-shell comb of terrifying aspect and hungry teeth, and an air showing forth a determination to adjust it in its destined place. Teacher meekly bowed her head; Jacob forced

his offering into her long-suffering hair, and then retired, with the information, "Cost fifteen cents, Teacher," and the courteous phrase—by etiquette prescribed—"Wish you health to wear it." He was plainly a hero, and was heard remarking to less favoured admirers that "Teacher's hair is awful softy, and smells off of perfumery."

Here a big boy, a very big boy, entered hastily. He did not belong to Room 18, but he had long known Teacher. He had brought her a present; he wished her a Merry Christmas. The present, when produced, proved to be a pretty gold cup, and Eva Gonorowsky, with renewed emotion, recognized the boy as her assailant and the cup as her property. Teacher was dreadfully embarrassed; the boy not at all so. His policy was simple and entire denial, and in this he persevered, even after Eva's saucer had unmistakably proclaimed its relationship to the cup.

Meanwhile the rush of presentation went steadily on. Other cups and saucers came in wild profusion. The desk was covered with them, and their wrappings of purple tissue paper required a monitor's whole attention. The soap, too, became urgently perceptible. It was of all sizes, shapes and colours, but of uniform and dreadful power of perfume. Teacher's eyes filled with tears—of gratitude—as each new piece or box was pressed against her nose, and Teacher's mind was full of wonder as to what she could ever do with all of it. Bottles of perfume vied with one another and with the all-pervading soap until the air was heavy and breathing grew laborious. But pride swelled the hearts of the assembled multitude. No other Teacher had so many helps to the toilet. None other was so beloved.

Teacher's aspect was quite changed, and the "blue long down like a lady dress" was almost hidden by the offerings she had received. Jacob's comb had two massive and bejeweled rivals in the "softy hair." The front of the dress, where aching or despondent heads were wont to rest, glittered with campaign buttons of American celebrities. Around the neck were three chaplets of beads, wrought by chubby fingers and embodying much love, while the waist-line was further adorned by tiny and beribboned aprons. Truly, it was a day of triumph.

When the waste-paper basket had been twice filled with wrappings and twice emptied; when order was emerging out of chaos; when

the Christmas-tree had been disclosed and its treasures distributed, a timid hand was laid on Teacher's knee and a plaintive voice whispered, "Say, Teacher, I got something for you"; and Teacher turned quickly to see Morris, her dearest boy charge, with his poor little body showing quite plainly between his shirt-waist buttons and through the gashes he called pockets. This was his ordinary costume, and the funds of the house of Mogilewsky were evidently unequal to an outer layer of finery.

"Now, Morris dear," said Teacher, "you shouldn't have troubled to get me a present; you know you and I are such good friends that ——"

"Teacher, yiss ma'am. I didn't"—with a glance at the crowded desk—"I didn't to have no soap nor no perfumery, and my mamma she couldn't to buy none by the store; but, Teacher, I'm got something awful nice for you by present."

"And what is it, deary?" asked the already rich and gifted young person. "What is my new present?"

"Teacher, it's like this: I don't know; I ain't so big like I could to know—it ain't for boys—it's for ladies. Over yesterday on the night comes my papa to my house, und he gives my mamma the present. Sooner she looks on it, sooner she has a awful glad; in her eyes stands tears, und she says, like that—out of Jewish—'Thanks,' un' she kisses my papa a kiss. Und my papa, *how* he is polite! he says—out of Jewish too—'You're welcome, all right,' un' he kisses my mamma a kiss. So my mamma, she sets und looks on the present, und all the time she looks she has a glad over it. Und I didn't to have no soap, so you could to have the present."

"But did your mother say I might?"

"Teacher, no ma'am; she didn't say like that, und she didn't to say *not* like that. She didn't to know. But it's for ladies, un' I didn't to have no soap. You could to look on it. It ain't for boys."

And here Morris opened a hot little hand and disclosed a tightly folded pinkish paper. As Teacher read it he watched her with eager, furtive eyes, dry and bright, until hers grew suddenly moist, when his promptly followed suit. As she looked down at him, he made his moan once more:

"It's for ladies, und I didn't to have no soap."

"But, Morris dear," cried Teacher unsteadily, laughing a little, "this is ever so much nicer than soap—a thousand times better than perfume; and you're quite right: it is for ladies, and I never had one in all my life before. I am so very thankful."

"You're welcome, all right. That's how my papa says; it's polite," said Morris proudly. And proudly he took his place among the very little boys, and loudly he joined in the ensuing song. For the rest of that exciting day he was a shining point of virtue in the rest of that confused class. And at three o'clock he was at Teacher's desk again, carrying on the conversation as if there had been no interruption.

Late that night Teacher sat in her pretty room—for she was, unofficially, a greatly pampered young person—and reviewed her treasures. She saw that they were very numerous, very touching, very whimsical, and very precious. But above all the rest she cherished a frayed and pinkish paper, rather crumpled and a little soiled. For it held the love of a man and a woman and a little child, and the magic of a home, for Morris Mogilewsky's Christmas present for ladies was the receipt for a month's rent for a room on the top floor of a Monroe Street tenement.

HAPPINESS [1]

Guy de Maupassant

It was tea-time before the appearance of the lamps. The villa commanded the sea; the sun, which had disappeared, had left the sky all rosy from his passing—rubbed, as it were, with gold-dust; and the Mediterranean, without a ripple, without a shudder, smooth, still shining under the dying day, seemed like a huge and polished metal plate.

Far off to the right the jagged mountains outlined their black profile on the paled purple of the west.

[1] From *The Odd Number*, by permission of Harper & Brothers.

We talked of love, we discussed that old subject, we said again the things which we had said already very often. The sweet melancholy of the twilight made our words slower, caused a tenderness to waver in our souls; and that word, "love," which came back ceaselessly, now pronounced by a strong man's voice, now uttered by the frail-toned voice of a woman, seemed to fill the little *salon*, to flutter there like a bird, to hover there like a spirit.

Can one remain in love for several years in succession?

"Yes," maintained some.

"No," affirmed others.

We distinguished cases, we established limitations, we cited examples; and all, men and women, filled with rising and troubling memories, which they could not quote, and which mounted to their lips, seemed moved, and talked of that common, that sovereign thing, the tender and mysterious union of two beings, with a profound emotion and an ardent interest.

But all of a sudden some one, whose eyes had been fixed upon the distance, cried out:

"Oh! Look down there; what is it?"

On the sea, at the bottom of the horizon, loomed up a mass, gray, enormous, and confused.

The women had risen from their seats, and without understanding, looked at this surprising thing which they had never seen before.

Some one said:

"It is Corsica! You see it so two or three times a year, in certain exceptional conditions of the atmosphere, when the air is perfectly clear, and it is not concealed by those mists of sea-fog which always veil the distances."

We distinguished vaguely the mountain ridges, we thought we recognized the snow of their summits. And every one remained surprised, troubled, almost terrified, by this sudden apparition of a world, by this phantom risen from the sea. Maybe that those who, like Columbus, went away across undiscovered oceans had such strange visions as this.

Then said an old gentleman who had not yet spoken:

"See here: I knew in that island which raises itself before us, as if in person to answer what we said, and to recall to me a singular

memory—I knew, I say, an admirable case of love which was true, of love which, improbably enough, was happy.

"Here it is.

"Five years ago I made a journey in Corsica. That savage island is more unknown and more distant from us than America, even though you see it sometimes from the very coasts of France, as we have done today.

"Imagine a world which is still chaos, imagine a storm of mountains separated by narrow ravines where torrents roll; not a single plain, but immense waves of granite, and giant undulations of earth covered with brushwood or with high forests of chestnut-trees and pines. It is a virgin soil, uncultivated, desert, although you sometimes make out a village like a heap of rocks, on the summit of a mountain. No culture, no industries, no art. One never meets here with a morsel of carved wood, or a bit of sculptured stone, never the least reminder that the ancestors of these people had any taste, whether rude or refined, for gracious and beautiful things. It is this which strikes you the most in their superb and hard country: their hereditary indifference to that search for seductive forms which is called Art.

"Italy, where every palace, full of masterpieces, is a masterpiece itself: Italy, where marble, wood, bronze, iron, metals, and precious stones attest man's genius, where the smallest old things which lie about in the ancient houses reveal that divine care for grace—Italy is for us the sacred country which we love, because she shows to us and proves to us the struggle, the grandeur, the power, and the triumph of the intelligence which creates.

"And, face to face with her, the savage Corsica has remained exactly as in her earliest days. A man lives there in his rude house, indifferent to everything which does not concern his own bare existence or his family feuds. And he has retained the vices and the virtues of savage races; he is violent, malignant, sanguinary without a thought of remorse, but also hospitable, generous, devoted, simple, opening his door to passers-by, and giving his faithful friendship in return for the least sign of sympathy.

"So, for a month, I had been wandering over this magnificent island with the sensation that I was at the end of the world. No more inns, no taverns, no roads. You gain by mule-paths hamlets hanging

up, as it were, on a mountain side, and commanding tortuous abysses whence of an evening you hear rising the steady sound, the dull and deep voice, of the torrent. You knock at the doors of the houses. You ask a shelter for the night and something to live on till the morrow. And you sit down at the humble board, and you sleep under the humble roof, and in the morning you press the extended hand of your host, who has guided you as far as the outskirts of the village.

"Now, one night, after ten hours' walking, I reached a little dwelling quite by itself at the bottom of a narrow valley which was about to throw itself into the sea a league farther on. The two steep slopes of the mountain, covered with brush, with fallen rocks, and with great trees, shut in this lamentably sad ravine like two somber walls.

"Around the cottage were some vines, a little garden, and farther off, several large chestnut-trees—enough to live on; in fact, a fortune for this poor country.

"The woman who received me was old, severe, and neat—exceptionally so. The man, seated on a straw chair, rose to salute me, then sat down again without saying a word. His companion said to me:

" 'Excuse him; he is deaf now. He is eighty-two years old.'

"She spoke the French of France. I was surprised.

"I asked her:

" 'You are not of Corsica?'

"She answered:

" 'No; we are from the Continent. But we have lived here now fifty years.'

"A feeling of anguish and of fear sized me at the thought of those fifty years passed in this gloomy hole, so far from the cities where human beings dwell. An old shepherd returned, and we began to eat the only dish there was for dinner, a thick soup in which potatoes, lard, and cabbages had been boiled together.

"When the short repast was finished, I went and sat down before the door, my heart pinched by the melancholy of the mournful landscape, wrung by that distress which sometimes seizes travelers on certain sad evenings, in certain desolate places. It seems that everything is near its ending—existence, and the universe itself. You perceive sharply the dreadful misery of life, the isolation of every one, the nothingness of all things, and the black loneliness of the heart which nurses itself and deceives itself with dreams until the hour of death.

"The old woman rejoined me, and, tortured by that curiosity which ever lies at the bottom of the most resigned of souls:

" 'So you come from France?' said she.

" 'Yes; I'm traveling for pleasure.'

" 'You are from Paris, perhaps?'

" 'No, I am from Nancy.'

"It seemed to me that an extraordinary emotion agitated her. How I saw, or rather how I felt it, I do not know.

"She repeated, in a slow voice:

" 'You are from Nancy?'

"The man appeared in the door, impassable, like all the deaf.

"She resumed:

" 'It doesn't make any difference. He can't hear.'

"Then, at the end of several seconds:

" 'So you know people at Nancy?'

" 'Oh yes, nearly everybody.'

" 'The family of Sainte-Allaize?'

" 'Yes, very well; they were friends of my father.'

" 'What are you called?'

"I told her my name. She regarded me fixedly, then said, in that low voice which is roused by memories:

" 'Yes, yes; I remember well. And the Brisemares, what has become of them?'

" 'They are all dead.'

" 'Ah! And the Sirmonts, do you know them?'

" 'Yes, the last of the family is a general.'

"Then she said, trembling with emotion, with anguish, with I do not know what, feeling confused, powerful, and holy, with I do not know how great a need to confess, to tell all, to talk of those things which she had hitherto kept shut in the bottom of her heart, and to speak of those people whose name distracted her soul:

" 'Yes, Henri de Sirmont. I know him well. He is my brother.'

"And I lifted my eyes at her, aghast with surprise. And all of a sudden my memory of it came back.

"It had caused, once, a great scandal among the nobility of Lorraine. A young girl, beautiful and rich, Suzanne de Sirmont, had run away with an under-officer in the regiment of hussars commanded by her father.

"He was a handsome fellow, the son of a peasant, but he carried his blue dolman very well, this soldier who had captivated his colonel's daughter. She had seen him, noticed him, fallen in love with him, doubtless while watching the squadrons filing by. But how she had got speech of him, how they had managed to see one another, to hear from one another; how she had dared to let him understand she loved him—that was never known.

"Nothing was divined, nothing suspected. One night when the soldier had just finished his time of service, they disappeared together. Her people looked for them in vain. They never received tidings, and they considered her as dead.

"So I found her in this sinister valley.

"Then in my turn I took up the word:

" 'Yes, I remember well. You are Mademoiselle Suzanne.'

"She made the sign 'yes' with her head. Tears fell from her eyes. Then with a look showing me the old man motionless on the threshold of his hut, she said:

" 'That is he.'

"And I understood that she loved him yet, that she still saw him with her bewitched eyes.

"I asked:

" 'Have you at least been happy?'

"She answered with a voice which came from her heart:

" 'Oh yes! very happy. He has made me very happy. I have never regretted.'

"I looked at her, sad, surprised, astounded by the sovereign strength of love! That rich young lady had followed this man, this peasant. She was become herself a peasant woman. She had made for herself a life without charm, without luxury, without delicacy of any kind, she had stooped to simple customs. And she loved him yet. She was become the wife of a rustic, in a cap, in a cloth skirt. Seated on a straw-bottomed chair, she ate from an earthen-ware dish, at a wooden table, a soup of potatoes and of cabbages with lard. She slept on a mattress by his side.

"She had never thought of anything but of him. She had never regretted her jewels, nor her fine dresses, nor the elegancies of life, nor the perfumed warmth of the chambers hung with tapestry, nor the softness of the down-beds where the body sinks in for repose. She

had never had need of anything but him; provided he was there, she desired nothing.

"Still young, she had abandoned life and the world and those who had brought her up, and who had loved her. She had come, alone with him, into this savage valley. And he had been everything to her, all that one desires, all that one dreams of, all that one waits for without ceasing, all that one hopes for without end. He had filled her life with happiness from the one end to the other.

"She could not have been more happy.

"And all the night, listening to the hoarse breathing of the old soldier stretched on his pallet beside her who had followed him so far, I thought of this strange and simple adventure, of this happiness so complete, made of so very little.

"And I went away at sunrise, after having pressed the hands of that aged pair."

The story-teller was silent. A woman said:

"All the same, she had ideals which were too easily satisfied, needs which were too primitive, requirements which were too simple. She could only have been a fool."

Another said, in a low, slow voice, "What matter! she was happy."

And down there at the end of the horizon, Corsica was sinking into the night, returning gently into the sea, blotting out her great shadow, which had appeared as if in person to tell the story of those two humble lovers who were sheltered by her coasts.

A KISS IN THE BOX TUNNEL

Charles Reade

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

THE 10.15 train glided from Paddington, May 7, 1847. In the left compartment of a certain first-class carriage were four passengers; of these, two were worth description. The lady had a

smooth, white, delicate brow, strongly marked eyebrows, long lashes, eyes that seemed to change color, and a good-sized delicious mouth, with teeth as white as milk.

Her opposite neighbor was what I call a good style of man—the more to his credit, since he belonged to a corporation that frequently turns out the worst imaginable style of young men. He was a cavalry officer, aged twenty-five. He had a mustache, but not a very repulsive one; not one of those subnasal pigtails on which soup is suspended like dew on a shrub; it was short, thick, and black as a coal. His teeth had not yet been turned by tobacco smoke to the color of juice, his clothes did not stick to nor hang to him; he had an engaging smile, his vanity was in its proper place, his heart, not in his face—in a word, he was what one oftener hears of than meets—a young gentleman. He was conversing in an animated whisper with a companion, a fellow-officer; they were talking about what it is far better not to—women. Our friend clearly did not wish to be overheard; for he cast ever and anon a furtive glance at his fair *vis-à-vis* and lowered his voice. She seemed completely absorbed in her book, and that reassured him. At last the two soldiers came down to a whisper (the truth must be told). The one who got off at Slough, and was lost to posterity, bet ten pounds to three that he who was going down to Bath and immortality would not kiss either of the ladies opposite upon the road. "Done, done!" Now, I am sorry a man I have hitherto praised should have lent himself, even in a whisper, to such a speculation; "but nobody is wise at all hours," not even when the clock is striking five-and-twenty; and you are to consider his profession, his good looks, and the temptation—ten to three.

After Slough the party was reduced to three; at Twylford one lady dropped her handkerchief; Captain Dolignan fell on it like a lamb; two or three words were exchanged on this occasion. At Reading the Marlborough of our tale made one of the safe investments of that day; he bought a *Times* and *Punch*; the latter full of steel-pen thrusts and woodcuts. Valor and beauty deigned to laugh at some inflamed humbug or other punctured by *Punch*. Now, laughing together thaws our human ice; long before Swindon who so devoted as Captain Dolignan?—he handed them out—he souped them—he tough chickened them—he brandied and cochinealed one, and he

brandied and burnt-sugared the other; on their return to the carriage one lady passed into the inner compartment to inspect a certain gentleman's seat on that side of the line.

You have seen a dog meet an unknown female of his species; how handsome, how *impressé*, how expressive he becomes; such was Dolignan after Swindon, and, to do the dog justice, he got handsome and handsomer; and you have seen a cat conscious of approaching cream—such was Miss Haythorn; she became demurer and demurer. Presently our captain looked out of the window and laughed, and this elicited an inquiring look from Miss Haythorn.

"We are only a mile from the Box Tunnel."

"Do you always laugh a mile from the Box Tunnel?" said the lady.

"Invariably."

"What for?"

"Why, hem! it is a gentleman's joke."

Captain Dolignan then recounted to Miss Haythorn the following:

"A lady and her husband sat together going through the Box Tunnel—there was one gentleman opposite; it was pitch dark: after the tunnel the lady said, 'George, how absurd of you to kiss me going through the tunnel.' 'I did no such thing.' 'You didn't?' 'No! Why?' 'Because I thought you did!'"

Here Captain Dolignan laughed and endeavored to lead his companion to laugh, but it was not to be done. The train entered the tunnel.

Miss Haythorn—Ah!

Dolignan—What is the matter?

Miss Haythorn—I am frightened.

Dolignan (*moving to her side*)—Pray do not be alarmed; I am near you.

Miss Haythorn—You are near me—very near me, indeed, Captain Dolignan.

Dolignan—You know my name?

Miss Haythorn—I heard you mention it. I wish we were out of this dark place.

Dolignan—I could be content to spend hours here, reassuring you, my dear lady.

Miss Haythorn—Nonsense! . . . Ee! Ee!

FRIEND—What is the matter?

MISS HAYTHORN—Open the door! Open the door!

There was a sound of hurried whispers, the door was shut and the blind pulled down with hostile sharpness.

Miss Haythorn's scream lost most of its effect because the engine whistled forty thousand murders at the same moment.

Between the tunnel and Bath our young friend had time to ask himself whether his conduct had been marked by that delicate reserve which is supposed to distinguish the perfect gentleman.

With a long face, real or feigned, he held open the door; his late friends attempted to escape on the other side. Impossible! they must pass him. She whom he had insulted (Latin for kissed) deposited somewhere at his feet a look of gentle, blushing reproach; the other, whom he had not insulted, darted red-hot daggers at him from her eyes; and so they parted.

It was perhaps fortunate for Dolignan that he had the grace to be a friend to Major Hoskyns of his regiment.

Captain Dolignan told this gentleman his story in gleeful accents; but Major Hoskyns heard him coldly, and as coldly answered that he had known a man to lose his life for the same thing.

"That is nothing," continued the Major; "but, unfortunately, he deserved to lose it."

At this, blood mounted to the younger man's temples; and his senior added, "I mean to say he was thirty-five; you, I presume, are twenty-one!"

"Twenty-five."

"That is much the same thing; will you be advised by me?"

"If you will advise me."

"Speak to no one of this, and send White the £3, that he may think you have lost the bet."

"That is hard, when I won it."

"Do it, for all that, sir."

Let the disbelievers in human perfectibility know that this dragoon capable of a blush did this virtuous action, albeit with violent reluctance; and this was his first damper. A week after these events he was at a ball. He was looking in vain for a lady, equal in personal attraction to the idea he had formed of George Dolignan as

a man, when suddenly there glided past him a most delightful vision! a lady whose beauty and symmetry took him by the eyes—another look: "It can't be! Yes, it is!"

He lost sight of her. He found her again. She was so lovely she made him ill—and he, alone, must not dance with her, speak to her. If he had been content to begin her acquaintance the usual way, it might have ended in kissing: it must end in nothing. As she danced, sparks of beauty fell from her on all around but him—she did not see him; it was clear she never would see him—one gentleman was particularly assiduous; she smiled on his assiduity; he was ugly, but she smiled on him. Dolignan was surprised at his success, his poor taste, his ugliness, his impertinence. Dolignan at last found himself injured; "Who was this man? and what right had he to go on so? He never kissed her, I suppose," said Dolle. Dolignan could not prove it, but he felt that somehow the rights of property were invaded. He went home and dreamed of Miss Haythorn, and hated all the ugly successful. He spent a fortnight trying to find out who his beauty was—he never could encounter her again. At last he heard of her in this way: A lawyer's clerk paid him a little visit and commenced a little action against him in the name of Miss Haythorn, for insulting her in a railway train.

The young gentleman was shocked; endeavored to soften the lawyer's clerk; that machine did not thoroughly comprehend the meaning of the term. The lady's name, however, was at last revealed by this untoward incident; from her name to her address was but a short step; and the same day our crestfallen hero lay in wait at her door, and many a succeeding day, without effect. But one fine afternoon she issued forth quite naturally, as if she did it every day, and walked briskly on the parade. Dolignan did the same, met and passed her many times on the parade, and searched for pity in her eyes, but found neither look nor recognition, nor any other sentiment; for all this she walked and walked, till all the other promenaders were tired and gone—then her culprit summoned resolution, and, taking off his hat, with a voice for the first time tremulous, besought permission to address her. She stopped, blushed, and neither acknowledged nor disowned his acquaintance. He blushed, stammered out how ashamed he was, how he deserved to be punished, how he

was punished, how little she knew how unhappy he was, and concluded by begging her not to let all the world know the disgrace of a man who was already mortified enough by the loss of her acquaintance. She asked an explanation; he told her of the action that had been commenced in her name; she gently shrugged her shoulders and said, "How stupid they are!" Emboldened by this, he begged to know whether or not a life of distant unpretending devotion would, after a lapse of years, erase the memory of his madness —his crime!

She did not know!

She must now bid him adieu, as she had some preparations to make for a ball in the Crescent, where everybody was to be. They parted, and Dolignan determined to be at the ball, where everybody was to be. He was there, and after some time he obtained an introduction to Miss Haythorn, and he danced with her. Her manner was gracious. With wonderful tact she seemed to have commenced the acquaintance that evening. That night, for the first time, Dolignan was in love. I will spare the listener all a lover's arts, by which he succeeded in dining where she dined, in dancing where she danced, in overtaking her by accident when she rode.

He made an acquaintance with her uncle, who liked him, and he saw at last with joy that her eye loved to dwell upon him, when she thought he did not observe her. It was three months after the Box Tunnel that Captain Dolignan called one day upon Captain Haythorn, R. N., whom he had met twice in his life, and in the usual way asked permission to pay his addresses to his daughter. The worthy captain straightway began doing quarter-deck, when suddenly he was summoned from the apartment by a mysterious message. On his return he announced with a total change of voice, that it was all right, and his visitor might "run alongside" as soon as he chose. This nautical commander, terrible to the foe, was in complete and happy subjugation to his daughter, our heroine.

As he was taking leave, Dolignan saw his divinity glide into the drawing-room. He followed her, observed a sweet consciousness deepen into confusion—she tried to laugh, and cried instead, and then she smiled again; when he kissed her hand at the door it was "George" and "Marian" instead of "Captain" this and "Miss" the other.

A reasonable time after this (for my tale is merciful and skips formalities and torturing delays), these two were very happy; they were once more upon the railroad, going to enjoy their honeymoon all by themselves. Marian Dolignan was dressed just as before—all bright except her clothes; but George sat beside her this time instead of opposite; and she drank him in gently from her long eyelashes.

"Marian," said George, "married people should tell each other all. Will you ever forgive me if I own to you; no ——"

"Yes! yes!"

"Well, then, you remember the Box Tunnel." (This was the first allusion he had ventured to it.) "I am ashamed to say I had £3 to £10 with White that I would kiss one of you two ladies," and George, pathetic externally, chuckled shamelessly within.

"I know that, George; I overheard you," was the demure reply.

"Oh! you overheard me! impossible."

"And did you not hear me whisper to my companion? I made a bet with her."

"You made a bet! What was it?"

"Only a pair of gloves, George."

"Yes, I know; but what about it?"

"That if you did you should be my husband, dearest."

"Oh! Then you could not have been so angry with me, love. Why then, dearest, did you bring that action against me?"

Mrs. Dolignan looked down.

"I was afraid you were forgetting me! George, you will never forgive me?"

"Sweet angel! Why, here is the Box Tunnel!"

Now, gentle listener—fie! no! no such thing! you can't expect to be indulged in this way every time we come to a dark place. Besides, it is not the thing. Consider, two sensible married people. No such phenomenon, I assure you, took place. No scream in helpless rivalry of the engine—this time!

THE VENDETTA [1]

W. Pett Ridge

I'D GO MYSELF," said the mother, "only that it would mean putting on my outdoor boots. But I can trust you, Muriel."

"I'll make their hair curl," declared Muriel with relish. "I'll talk to them like a Dutch uncle. I'll make 'em stare with both eyes. I won't let 'em get in a word edgeways."

"That's right."

"I shall begin talking the moment the door's opened, and I shall keep straight on without stopping. I'm pretty good at it," remarked the girl modestly, "once I get started."

"Practice won't do you no harm. It's not a gift that you're born with, remember. As a baby you never said a word until you were close on two—a year and ten months it was, to be exact. You stumbled over the cat, and you used an expression that you must have got from your father. Now, don't say anything for a bit. Just let me think it all out, so I can give you your instructions. Try not to be idle in the meantime; set to and light a candle."

The mother's lips moved silently; her forehead contracted in the effort of invention and careful rehearsal. Once or twice her daughter endeavoured to make suggestions, but to these she would not listen, holding up a hand as a danger signal, and a warning to stop.

Presently she appeared to have found inspiration, and, rising from the rocking-chair with a stern reproof to rheumatism, she walked up and down the small room. She began to gesticulate. Her daughter cleared the table, clattering the cups and saucers impatiently, and announcing her intention of deferring the formality of washing up until the morning; this on the ground that too many subjects should not be crowded on the brain at one and the same time, lest lunacy ensue.

"You turn out of the main road," said the mother, speaking deliberately, "and you walk down on the right-hand pavement—the right-

[1] Reprinted with the permission of the author.

hand—until you come to 26. Now, Muriel, do mind how you knock at the door. Don't overdo it, don't underdo it. Not a single knock; not a long rat-tat; try to manage something betwixt and between. When she opens, you say (pretending to be quite civil), 'Pardon me, but does Mrs. Watson by any chance 'appen to be in?' Let's hear you say it."

" 'Excuse me, but is Mrs. Watson at home?' "

"You're not paying attention. Listen to what I'm saying, and how I say it, and say it after me." Her daughter obeyed.

"And she'll answer, 'I am Mrs. Watson.' And you'll say, 'Oh really; can I speak to you for a few moments?' That takes you into the passage. Close the front door after you, but don't close it right to; because when you've finished you'll want to skip off sharp without letting her have a chance to say anything back. See?"

"Rather!"

" 'Mrs. Watson!' you'll go on, 'Mrs. Watson, my mother asked me to call and see you about one or two small matters.' You can say all this quietly because until she knows who you are—understand what I mean?—she'll be so pleasant in her manner that you'd think butter wouldn't melt in her mouth. She won't recognize you, Muriel; the two families haven't been on speaking terms since you was in short frocks and her boy was in a knickerbocker suit and a sailor hat. But the moment you tell her who you are, then you've got to begin. Mustn't lose a moment then."

"I shall start by asking her ——"

The girl found herself ordered to dismiss at once the idea that she need give to her parent any sort of help in composition of this delicate matter; all that she had to do was to listen and to learn, and to refrain, if she could, from irrelevant interruption. The mother had often wished the girl might grow up with a due and proper respect for her elders: the prayer, apparently, had miscarried.

"You'll put your back against the wall, and you'll say, 'Mrs. Watson, you seem to be one of those who talk without thinking of what they're talking about, either that or else you're a malicious low-minded woman and you can take your choice which you've been passing remarks about our family on the strength of having been allowed to know us for a short period of time years ago before we

found out the kind of person you were and those remarks, Mrs. Watson, have come back to us and you probably never thought that your tittle-tattling would travel so far but it has and it's all been repeated to us word for word the same as you uttered it and you've been raking up old grievances, Mrs. Watson, and you've been saying things that have got no more truth in them than—than ——' " She stopped for breath and for a phrase.

"Nothing at all."

"Let's think of something better than that."

"No more truth in them than you've got sense in your head."

"Not bad," admitted the mother.

"No more truth in them than you've got a right to making such remarks."

"That's not so good. But the great thing, Muriel, will be to keep right on, and not allow her to stop you. 'Mrs. Watson,' you can say, 'my mother has seen a solicitor about it.' " The girl gave signs of astonishment; the mother declared there could be no harm in making any statement, the exactitude of which could not be disproved. " 'Seen a solicitor and he strongly advises her to make a law case of it but my mother says that if she gets damages she'll be no better off because you never made a habit of paying what you owed and she supposes that you're too old to begin now, but mother does think that when a person like yourself gets to forty-five'—that'll touch her up, because she's only just over forty, as a matter of fact—'gets to forty-five she ought to try to live a peaceable life and make friendships instead of breaking them, and mother says she's got her own opinion about you and if *she* liked she could talk and tell a thing or two but thank Heaven she's got too much pride in herself to do anything of the kind only if this happens again, she promises you that she'll take action.' "

"Shall I tell her what sort, mother?"

"You tell her just what I've told you, miss. No more and no less. Now let's hear what you're going to say."

Prompting and some amendments and many corrections were given the girl preparing herself the while for outdoor promenade and deliberating on the question of head-gear; decision come to that Sunday apparel should be worn for the more perfect abasement of

the Watson family. The denunciatory speech became strengthened here and there and its points sharpened; the girl was recalled at the last moment because a new reading of the part had occurred to the mother—a reading in which the voice was not raised, but all the barbed sentences delivered in quiet, ordinary tones, and with a pitying smile. Several expressions of face had to be tried ere the right and exactly correct was selected; the girl went off wearing this carefully, and repeating the opening phrases to herself.

"If you *can* manage to hint," said the mother, at the doorway, "that we've found out something about her at the time before she was married, by all means do so."

She made an attempt to engage in domestic work, but, anxiety intervening, she gave this up, and sitting down, rocked gently to and fro, watching the clock and beaming contentedly. Apparently she was reconstituting the scene at the Watsons', and deriving therefrom a considerable amount of calm enjoyment. When the time came for the girl to return, the mother went to the front door. She waited there for a full half-hour ere she perceived Muriel turning the corner; the girl waved a hand to some one in the main road.

"Now set down," ordered the mother, trembling with anticipation and eagerness, "set down and tell us all about it."

"Glad I wore my best hat."

"Never dreamed of letting you go in any other. How did she take it all?"

"And thank goodness I'd got gloves on."

"Begin at the beginning. You knocked at the door?"

"Knocked at the door," said Muriel dreamily, "and he opened it. He opened it. And oh, mother, he has grown up such a nice-looking young chap, with the straightest nose ——"

"I wish now," interrupted the mother crossly, "I wish to goodness now that I'd taken the trouble to put me boots on and go myself."

THE FALLING LEAVES [1]

Felix Salten

THE leaves were falling from the great oak at the meadow's edge. They were falling from all the trees.

One branch of the oak reached high above the others and stretched far out over the meadow. Two leaves clung to its very tip.

"It isn't the way it used to be," said one leaf to the other.

"No," the other leaf answered. "So many of us have fallen to-night we're almost the only ones left on our branch."

"You never know who's going to go next," said the first leaf. "Even when it was warm and the sun shone, a storm or a cloudburst would come sometimes, and many leaves were torn off, though they were still young. You never know who's going to go next."

"The sun seldom shines now," sighed the second leaf, "and when it does it gives no warmth. We must have warmth again."

"Can it be true," said the first leaf, "can it be true, that others come to take our places when we're gone and after them still others, and more and more?"

"It is really true," whispered the second leaf. "We can't even begin to imagine it, it's beyond our powers."

"It makes me very sad," added the first leaf.

They were silent a while. Then the first leaf said quietly to herself, "Why must we fall? . . ."

The second leaf asked, "What happens to us when we have fallen?"

"We sink down. . . ."

"What is under us?"

The first leaf answered, "I don't know, some say one thing, some another, but nobody knows."

The second leaf asked, "Do we feel anything, do we know anything about ourselves when we're down there?"

The first leaf answered, "Who knows? Not one of all those down there has ever come back to tell us about it."

[1] Reprinted from *Bambi*, by Felix Salten, by permission of Simon and Schuster, Inc.

They were silent again. Then the first leaf said tenderly to the other, "Don't worry so much about it, you're trembling."

"That's nothing," the second leaf answered, "I tremble at the least thing now. I don't feel so sure of my hold as I used to."

"Let's not talk any more about such things," said the first leaf.

The other replied, "No, we'll let it be. But—what else shall we talk about?" She was silent, but went on after a little while, "Which of us will go first?"

"There's still plenty of time to worry about that," the other leaf assured her. "Let's remember how beautiful it was, how wonderful, when the sun came out and shone so warmly that we thought we'd burst with life. Do you remember? And the morning dew, and the mild and splendid nights. . . ."

"Now the nights are dreadful," the second leaf complained, "and there is no end to them."

"We shouldn't complain," said the first leaf gently. "We've outlived many, many others."

"Have I changed much?" asked the second leaf shyly but determinedly.

"Not in the least," the first leaf assured her. "You only think so because I've got to be so yellow and ugly. But it's different in your case."

"You're fooling me," the second leaf said.

"No, really," the first leaf exclaimed eagerly. "Believe me, you're as lovely as the day you were born. Here and there may be a little yellow spot but it's hardly noticeable and only makes you handsomer, believe me."

"Thanks," whispered the second leaf, quite touched. "I don't believe you, not altogether, but I thank you because you're so kind, you've always been so kind to me. I'm just beginning to understand how kind you are."

"Hush," said the other leaf, and kept silent herself for she was too troubled to talk anymore.

Then they were both silent. Hours passed.

A moist wind blew, cold and hostile, through the tree-tops.

"Ah, now," said the second leaf, "I. . . ." Then her voice broke off. She was torn from her place and spun down.

Winter had come.

GUNSHY![1]

Tom Saunders

At the age of eight weeks, Rap, the little white and liver pointer, left his mother and came to live with me. Rap was one of those pups that seems to fit your idea of what a pointer pup should be. Of course I couldn't tell much at eight weeks. You never can. But a good pedigree means good blood, and good shooting dog blood means good chances for a good bird dog. And, as I say, Rap fitted right in with the family. He chawed up a few sets of underwear hanging too low on the clothesline, and he was clumsy as any pup—fall down taking corners on a hardwood floor, run into things, and did "odd jobs" around the house until a few lessons had shown him that the great outdoors was the proper place for such things.

I was interested and pleased to find the little devil learning his simple yard lessons quickly and well. The pup had a head on him, and he used it. He began to lengthen out, some. Got rangy, and even more awkward. He'd drop to command—not sulkily, or not cowering—but as if he wanted to please you by doing the right thing. He began to jump up on everyone with his muddy feet, and he got his hind toes stepped on a couple of times for a penalty on these bowery manners. He never did it again—except when excitement got the best of him, and a good firm word or two would set him right, then.

He'd go find a pa'tridge wing when you said "Dead bird." And he'd fetch it and give, with very little forcing. You could hide the wing most anywhere within reason and he'd sniff and hunt and worry around under things with his eyes gleaming, and his nose twitching.

He was a nice going dog—for a pup. You could tell he was going to have a high head and merry tail. He'd look good on the bench, except for his eyes, which were too light, in color.

I began to talk bird hunting to him, and you could tell he was a bird dog right enough by the way he'd point robins and other small birds around the yard.

[1] Reprinted from *Hunting and Fishing* by permission of the author.

Come nesting time he was about ten months old, and when, in September, he was just a year old I set out one day to put him on game. I knew where there were some quail hanging 'round a big weed patch about a mile from home. Nearby was a birch and alder cover where I might be able to put Rap onto a woodcock. Woodcock lie close and make one of the best birds to train dogs on. Also a covey of quail will generally give off such a strong scent that a young dog gets plenty of faith in his own nose right off the bat.

Near the woodcock cover lived old Hank, who was death on woodchucks, in or out of garden season. As Rap and I were walking along a stonewall I happened to look over and saw Hank squatting down, with his old ten bore hammer gun nuzzled up in working position. I looked across the field about fifty yards and saw a woodchuck sitting near a fence corner. I started to yell a warning to Hank, but it was too late. Rap was frisking around, nosing into things and hunting, and I had been letting him run to kind of widen his experience and to satisfy his natural curiosity. Before I had time to take in the situation and yell at Hank, Rap cleared the stonewall, and lit right alongside of Hank. Hank didn't know we were there, and it so happened that just as Rap hit the ground, Hank let go with the ten bore.

Poor little Rap had never heard a gun go off. I think it almost scared him to death. He fell down, sprawling with fright. Then he ran around in a couple of wide circles, tail between his legs, eyes wild. Finally he came back and pressed against my legs and looked up to me for sympathy and protection. I didn't pet him, or speak to him or look at him. It makes a dog think there really is something to be frightened at when you do. And a dog learns lots from his master's actions. I just turned around and walked home and put Rap back in the kennel.

Believe me, I was disappointed. It's pretty tough when a dog you've set a lot of store by, goes suddenly gunshy through no fault of your own.

I had heard of gunshy dogs that were incurable, and as I looked down at poor little Rap, shaking with fright, I thought one of those cases was on my hands.

For a week, I fed Rap as usual, twice a day. The biggest feed containing a good supply of meat, at night. Then one day when it was

rather cold, and the pup was ravenously hungry, I hit two pans together while he was eating. He jumped back from his food, eyes bulging, legs trembling. Then, being very hungry, he crept back cowering to his food. In a week's time he would eat while I rattled the pans. I went at him slowly and carefully, willing to give him plenty of time. I thought he was gradually improving.

One day I took him afield to try him on game. We passed the place where old Hank had fired at the woodchuck. Rap hung close to my heels, eyeing the place nervously. I said nothing, walked along steadily as if things were all well. I put Rap into the woodcock cover, and I could see by the borings and white paint on the dead leaves that birds were there—or had been the night before. It looked as though the first flight was on.

"Go find one, Rap," I said, motioning into the cover. It was quiet and still in there. You could smell the brown leaves, and the dampness. Rap loved it. It was natural for him to be in there sniffing and running and hunting.

Five minutes after we entered the cover I saw him tense up a little, slow his gait, his head forward, tail slashing. I knew he was making game. I took a couple of quick steps, getting close behind him. Suddenly he stopped, fore paw lifting slowly. He placed it ahead about six inches, settled the paw silently and softly into the damp leaves. Then he steadied into a point. I put a hand on him and spoke to him. "Good dog, Rap. Steady, now. Easy." I suppose if I'd looked sharp enough I could have seen the woodcock. He wasn't but four feet away when he got up. Rap made a sudden forward lunge as the 'cock rose, whistling, to clear the birches and sail away. "Whoa, Rap," I said. "Whoa, now."

His eyes were bulged out in the direction the bird had gone. He was excited and shaking a little. I kept handling him and talking to him until he looked around at me and began to wag his tail. Then I said: "Go on in and find him, Rap."

He stood the bird again. I flushed it, and Rap restrained his natural instinct to break. Right then I knew I had a pup that would make a wonderful shooting dog—if only he wasn't gunshy. A gunshy dog is the biggest thorn in the upland gunner's flesh. It's worse than that when you suddenly realize that your gunshy dog is blessed with a keen nose, fair style, and is a hunter from the first word.

Rap pointed four woodcock that day, and was making game on an old cock pa'tridge when the bird flushed wild. He only broke once to wing, and I think that was my fault for putting too much faith in his powers of restraint when the dog was so young. Walking home that night I was pretty discouraged. Would Rap ever get over that infernal blast of the ten gauge gun? Would I ever dare take a gun along and shoot a bird over him? Would I ever have the satisfaction, and would he ever have joy of retrieving a bird shot over his own point?

Gunning season was getting on. I didn't do much hunting. I was too interested in curing Rap's gunshyness, and it was slow tedious work. He got used to the dishpan racket. Then I began to slam the kennel door while he was feeding. Once I saw the old terror creeping back into his eyes, and I quit for a while. Then he got used to the door, and I tried firing a blank cartridge from the training pistol. Rap jumped ten feet sideways, and I thought I'd ruined things. The pistol sounded too much like that gun. Funny how an early experience will stick so long in a pup's mind. One day I fired the pistol and Rap looked up, braced, then relaxed and went back to feeding. I thought the battle was won, right then. I began to plan for the future. I had it figured out that I would walk three steps closer each day, until I was firing the pistol right over him.

But my plans were shot to pieces the very next morning when I got word that I had to go to Milwaukee for three weeks on business. I figured that things were all off for that gunning season, and maybe I would have to train Rap all over again. I went to Milwaukee unwillingly, and stayed there until my job was done. I got filled up plenty on city life, when all my natural desires were for fall covers with dog and gun. I hadn't shot a bird all season, and it didn't look as if I would.

I finished up a day early and got back home early on the morning of the last day of gunning season—November 20. I tried to put the thoughts of gunning out of my mind. Then I called up a couple of old friends. "Hello, Fred there?" I asked on the first call. "No, Fred's not in." "Where is he, Mrs. Larkin?" "He's gone hunting." The second call another wife answered the phone. "Hello, Mrs. Everhard? Len home?" "No, Mr. Saunders. Len's out gunning for the last day of the season." "Oh," I said, and hung up. Talk about lonesome!

I walked out to the kennel and fooled with Rap for a while. Then I sat down on a bushel box, and looked at him. He came up and I scratched his ear for him. He sniffed and jumped up, putting his fore paws against the wire of his kennel. "What's the matter with you?" I growled at him. He slid his toe nails down the wire and went over and lay down, watching me.

"I'll take a chance, and hang myself if it goes wrong," I said to myself. Then I unlatched the kennel door and let Rap out. I went in the house and got my gun and shell vest and changed my clothes. When I came out into the yard Rap was racing up and down through the leaves, whining and trying not to bark because he knew it was bad manners. One good yip squeezed out finally, and I passed it by. "Come on," I said.

I think that was the first hunt I ever started on that I wished I hadn't gone—right at the beginning. We went down to the woodcock cover. There might be a few last straggling flight birds, but I was sure of finding a pa'tridge or two, anyway.

I looked down at Rap, then at my gun. Rap knew what a gun was. He'd seen one before and heard one! I opened the breech and dropped in a couple of shells. I closed the breech, laid the stock under my right arm, and the barrels in the crook of my left elbow. "Go ahead and find a bird, Rap," I said.

I must admit that I didn't get the usual thrill out of watching Rap enter the cover. Maybe I was ashamed of myself. Maybe I knew I was taking a chance, I don't know. Still, I'd put in some hard training on Rap's gunshyness—and his last lesson had been passed successfully.

The leaves were soft and damp. There was no wind—already there was a blue haze collecting whenever a distant view would show through the branches. Almost all the leaves were down. The cover was fairly open. It was a perfect fall day, and something was "birdy" about the air. Lots of times you can tell, almost as if you'd actually scented them, that birds are near. It seems to get into the air, some way, and you can feel the creeping sensation up and down your spine. I felt it then—and then I thought of the gun, and I wondered what would happen.

Rap was making game a little to the right in an opening in the

alders. In there were some old apple trees, too, and it was ideal for grouse. They hang around old orchards a lot, and like wild apples, too.

I was still feeling kind of blue about taking a chance with Rap, when he came to a staunch point about twenty feet from one of the old apple trees. I looked at him a long time—he was a straight line from the tip of his tail to the end of his nose. He was as solid as a rock. Nice work, I thought, and began to walk slowly in. I kept one eye on Rap, and the other on the base of an old apple tree. I wondered whether I had better shoot. I wondered if Rap would cower, and circle and come back for protection.

I snapped off the safety, brought the gun forward. I took one step ahead of Rap, then another and another. Whir-r-r-r! Up went the old pa'tridge as if he'd been sprung from a trap. It was instinct to swing onto him. It was instinct to lead a little, and press the front trigger. The sound of the gun brought me back to my senses. The bird dropped—out of sight. It dropped out of my mind as quickly, and the thought of Rap came in. I looked down at him. *He was steady.* He hadn't moved—not that I could tell. But yes—he had! He was looking into the cover, trying to see where the bird had fallen. Then his tail began to wag.

It was tough trying to act normal right then. I wanted to yell and do a war dance, and pick Rap up, and a lot of undignified things. But I said: "Go fetch, Rap. Dead bird!" Rap kind of loosened up all over, and put his nose down, then up into the wind.

He found the bird and brought it to me, and I sat down and let him nose the bird, and petted him. Then I picked up my gun to see what he'd do. He kind of held back for a minute. Then his ears pricked up and he wagged his tail. I rubbed him behind the ears, and said: "Rap, old boy. You're cured." And I've never owned a better dog!

CLOTHES MAKE THE MAN[1]

Booth Tarkington

I

FORESHADOWINGS

MR. AND MRS. BAXTER, having walked a scorched half-mile from church, drooped thankfully into wicker chairs upon their front porch, though Jane, who had accompanied them, immediately darted away, swinging her hat by its ribbon and skipping as lithesomely as if she had just come forth upon a cool morning.

"I don't know how she does it!" her father moaned, glancing after her and drying his forehead temporarily upon a handkerchief. "That would merely kill me dead, after walking in this heat."

Then, for a time, the two were content to sit in silence, nodding to occasional acquaintances who passed in the desultory after-church procession. Mr. Baxter fanned himself with sporadic little bursts of energy which made his straw hat creak, and Mrs. Baxter sighed with the heat, and gently rocked her chair.

But as a group of five young people passed along the other side of the street Mr. Baxter abruptly stopped fanning himself, and, following the direction of his gaze, Mrs. Baxter ceased to rock. In half-completed attitudes they leaned slightly forward, sharing one of those pauses of parents who unexpectedly behold their offspring.

"My soul!" said William's father. "Hasn't that girl gone home *yet*?"

"He looks pale to me," Mrs. Baxter murmured, absently. "I don't think he seems at all well, lately."

During seventeen years Mr. Baxter had gradually learned not to protest anxieties of this kind, unless he desired to argue with no

[1] Reprinted from *Seventeen* by Booth Tarkington, through the permission of Harper & Brothers.

Tarkington's three divisions have been kept intact to serve as a problem in sustaining interest and for group reading in class. The story can easily be manipulated according to the time limit of individuals.

prospect of ever getting a decision. "Hasn't she got any *home*?" he demanded, testily. "Isn't she ever going to quit visiting the Parchers and let people have a little peace?"

Mrs. Baxter disregarded this outburst as he had disregarded her remark about William's pallor. "You mean Miss Pratt?" she inquired, dreamily, her eyes following the progress of her son. "No, he really doesn't look well at all."

"Is she going to visit the Parchers all summer?" Mr. Baxter insisted.

"She already has, about," said Mrs. Baxter.

"Look at that boy!" the father grumbled. "Mooning along with those other moon-calves—can't even let her go to church alone! I wonder how many weeks of time, counting it out in hours, he's wasted that way this summer?"

"Oh, I don't know! You see, he never goes there in the evening."

"What of that? He's there all day, isn't he? What do they find to talk about? That's the mystery to me! Day after day; hours and hours—My soul! What do they *say*?"

Mrs. Baxter laughed indulgently. "People are always wondering that about the other ages. Poor Willie! I think that a great deal of the time their conversation would be probably about as inconsequent as it is now. You see Willie and Joe Bullitt are walking one on each side of Miss Pratt, and Johnnie Watson has to walk behind with May Parcher. Joe and Johnnie are there about as much as Willie is, and, of course, it's often his turn to be nice to May Parcher. He hasn't many chances to be tête-à-tête with Miss Pratt."

"Well, she ought to go home. I want that boy to get back into his senses. He's in an awful state."

"I think she is going soon," said Mrs. Baxter. "The Parchers are to have a dance for her Friday night, and I understand there's to be a floor laid in the yard and great things. It's a farewell party."

"That's one mercy, anyhow!"

"And if you wonder what they say," she resumed, "why, probably they're all talking about the party. And when Willie *is* alone with her—well, what does anybody say?" Mrs. Baxter interrupted herself to laugh. "Jane, for instance—she's always fascinated by that darky, Genesis, when he's at work here in the yard, and they have long,

long talks; I've seen them from the window. What on earth do you suppose they talk about? That's where Jane is now. She knew I told Genesis I'd give him something if he'd come and freeze the ice-cream for us to-day, and when we got here she heard the freezer and hopped right around there. If you went out to the back porch you'd find them talking steadily—but what on earth about I couldn't guess to save my life!"

And yet nothing could have been simpler: as a matter of fact, Jane and Genesis (attended by Clematis) were talking about society. That is to say, their discourse was not sociologic; rather it was of the frivolous and elegant. Watteau prevailed with them over John Stuart Mill—in a word, they spoke of the *beau monde.*

Genesis turned the handle of the freezer with his left hand, allowing his right the freedom of gesture which was an intermittent necessity when he talked. In the matter of dress, Genesis had always been among the most informal of his race, but to-day there was a change almost unnerving to the Caucasian eye. He wore a balloonish suit of purple, strangely scalloped at pocket and cuff, and more strangely decorated with lines of small parasite buttons, in color blue, obviously buttons of leisure. His bulbous new shoes flashed back yellow fire at the embarrassed sun, and his collar (for he had gone so far) sent forth other sparkles, playing upon a polished surface over an inner graining of soot. Beneath it hung a simple, white, soiled evening tie, draped in a manner unintended by its manufacturer, and heavily overburdened by a green glass medallion of the Emperor Tiberius, set in brass.

"Yes'm," said Genesis. "Now I'm in 'at Swim—flyin' roun' ev'y night wif all lem blue-vein people—I say, 'Mus' go buy me some blue-vein clo'es! Ef I'm go'n' a *start,* might's well start *high*!' So firs', I buy me thishere gol' necktie pin wi' thishere lady's face carved out o' green di'mon', sittin' in the middle all 'at gol'. 'Nen I buy me pair Royal King shoes. I got a frien' o' mine, thishere Blooie Bowers; he say Royal King shoes same kine o' shoes *he* wear, an' I walk straight in 'at sto' where they keep 'em at. 'Don' was'e my time showin' me no ole-time shoes,' I say. 'Run out some them big, yella, lump-toed Royal Kings befo' my eyes, an' firs' pair fit me I pay price, an' wear 'em right off on me!' 'Nen I got me thishere

suit o' clo'es—*oh*, oh! Sign on 'em in window: 'Ef you wish to be bes'-dress' man in town take me home fer six dolluhs ninety-sevum cents.' ' 'At's kine o' suit Genesis need,' I say. 'Ef Genesis go'n' a start dressin' high, might's well start top!' "

Jane nodded gravely, comprehending the reasonableness of this view. "What made you decide to start, Genesis?" she asked, earnestly. "I mean, how did it happen you began to get this way?"

"Well, suh, 'tall come 'bout right like kine o' slidin' into it 'stid o' hoppin' an' jumpin'. I'z spen' the even' at 'at lady's house, Fanny, what cook nex' do', las' year. Well, suh, 'at lady Fanny, she quit privut cookin', she kaytliss ——"

"She's what?" Jane asked. "What's that mean, Genesis—kaytliss?"

"She kaytuhs," he explained. "Ef it's a man you call him kaytuh; ef it's a lady, she's a kaytliss. She does kaytun fer all lem blue-vein fam'lies in town. She make ref'eshmuns, bring waituhs—'at's kaytun. You' maw give big dinnuh, she have Fanny kaytuh, an' don't take no trouble 'tall herself. Fanny take all 'at trouble."

"I see," said Jane. "But I don't see how her bein' a kaytliss started you to dressin' so high, Genesis."

"Thishere way. Fanny say, 'Look here, Genesis, I got big job t'morra night an' I'm man short, 'count o' havin' to have a 'nouncer.' "

"A what?"

"Fanny talk jes' that way. Goin' be big dinnuh-potty, an' thishere blue-vein fam'ly tell Fanny they want whole lot extry sploogin'; tell her put fine-lookin' cullud man stan' by drawin'-room do'—ask ev'y-body name an' holler out whatever name they say, jes' as they walk in. Thishere fam'ly say they goin' show what's what, 'nis town, an' they boun' Fanny go git 'em a 'nouncer. 'Well, what's mattuh *you* doin' 'at 'nouncin'?' Fanny say. 'Who—me?' I tell her. 'Yes, you kin, too!' she say, an' she say she len' me 'at waituh suit yoosta b'long ole Henry Gimlet what die' when he owin' Fanny sixteen dolluhs—an' Fanny tuck an' keep 'at waituh suit. She use 'at suit on extry waituhs when she got some on her hands what 'ain't got no waituh suit. 'You wear 'at suit,' Fanny say, 'an' you be good 'nouncer, 'cause you' a fine, big man, an' got a big, gran' voice; 'nen you learn befo' long be a waituh, Genesis, an' git dolluh an' half ev'y even' you waitin', 'sides all 'at money you make cuttin' grass daytime.'

Well, suh, I'z stan' up doin' 'at 'nouncin' ve'y nex' night. White lady an' ge'lmun walk todes my do', I step up to 'em—I step up to 'em thisaway."

Here Genesis found it pleasant to present the scene with some elaboration. He dropped the handle of the freezer, rose, assumed a stately, but ingratiating, expression, and "stepped up" to the imagined couple, using a pacing and rhythmic gait—a conservative prance, which plainly indicated the simultaneous operation of an orchestra. Then bending graciously, as though the persons addressed were of dwarfish stature, " 'Scuse me," he said, "but kin I please be so p'lite as to 'quiah you' name?" For a moment he listened attentively, then nodded, and, returning with the same aristocratic undulations to an imaginary doorway near the freezer, "Misto an' Missuz Orlosko Rinktum!" he proclaimed, sonorously.

"*Who?*" cried Jane, fascinated. "Genesis, 'nounce that again, right away!"

Genesis heartily complied.

"Misto an' Missuz Orlosko Rinktum!" he bawled.

"Was that really their names?" she asked, eagerly.

"Well, I kine o' fergit," Genesis admitted, resuming his work with the freezer. "Seem like I rickalect *somebody* got name good deal like what I say, 'cause some mighty blue-vein names at 'at dinnuh-potty, yessuh! But I on'y git to be 'nouncer one time, 'cause Fanny tellin' me nex' fam'ly have dinnuh-potty make heap o' fun. Say I done my 'nouncin' *good*, but say what's use holler'n' names jes' fer some the neighbors or they own aunts an' uncles to walk in, when ev'ybody awready knows 'em? So Fanny pummote me to waituh, an' I roun' right in amongs' big doin's mos' ev'y night. Pass ice-cream, lemonade, lemon-ice, cake, samwitches. 'Lemme han' you li'l' mo' chicken salad, ma'am'—' 'Low me be so kine as to git you f'esh cup coffee, suh'—'S way ole Genesis talkin' ev'y even' 'ese days!"

Jane looked at him thoughtfully. "Do you like it better than cuttin' grass, Genesis?" she asked.

He paused to consider. "Yes'm—when ban' play all lem *tunes*! My goo'ness, do soun' gran'!"

"You can't do it to-night, though, Genesis," said Jane. "You haf to be quiet on Sunday nights, don't you?"

"Yes'm. 'Ain' got no mo' kaytun till nex' Friday even'."

"Oh, I bet that's the party for Miss Pratt at Mr. Parcher's!" Jane cried. "Didn't I guess right?"

"Yes'm. I reckon I'm a-go'n' a see one you' fam'ly 'at night; see him dancin'—wait on him at ref'eshmuns."

Jane's expression became even more serious than usual. "Willie? I don't know whether he's goin', Genesis."

"Lan' name!" Genesis exclaimed. "He die ef he don' git *in*vite to 'at ball!"

"Oh, he's invited," said Jane. "Only I think maybe he won't go."

"My goo'ness! Why ain' he goin'?"

Jane looked at her friend studiously before replying. "Well, it's a secret," she said, finally, "but it's a very inter'sting one, an' I'll tell you if you never tell."

"Yes'm; I ain' tellin' nobody."

Jane glanced round, then stepped a little closer and told the secret with the solemnity it deserved. "Well, when Miss Pratt first came to visit Miss May Parcher, Willie used to keep papa's evening clo'es in his window-seat, an' mamma wondered what *had* become of 'em. Then, after dinner, he'd slip up there an' put 'em on him, an' go out through the kitchen an' call on Miss Pratt. Then mamma found 'em, an' she thought he oughtn't to do that, so she didn't tell him or anything, an' she didn't even tell papa, but she had the tailor make 'em ever an' ever so much bigger, 'cause they were gettin' too tight for papa. An' well, so after that, even if Willie could get 'em out o' mamma's clo'es-closet where she keeps 'em now, he'd look so funny in 'em he couldn't wear 'em. Well, an' then he couldn't go to pay calls on Miss Pratt in the evening since then, because mamma says after he started to go there in that suit he couldn't go without it, or maybe Miss Pratt or the other ones that's in love of her would think it was pretty queer, an' maybe kind of expeck it was papa's all the time. Mamma says she thinks Willie must have worried a good deal over reasons to say why he'd always go in the daytime after that, an' never came in the evening, an' now they're goin' to have this party, an' she says he's been gettin' paler and paler every day since he heard about it. Mamma says he's pale *some* because Miss Pratt's goin' away, but she thinks it's a good deal more because, well,

if he would wear those evening clo'es just to go *callin'*, how would it be to go to that *party* an' not have any! That's what mamma thinks—an', Genesis, you promised you'd never tell as long as you live!"

"Yes'm. *I* ain' tellin'," Genesis chuckled. "I'm a-go'n' a git me one nem waituh suits befo' long, myse'f, so's I kin quit wearin' 'at ole Henry Gimlet suit what b'long to Fanny, an' have me a privut suit o' my own. They's a secon'-han' sto' ovuh on the avynoo, where they got swaller-tail suits all way f'um sevum dolluhs to nineteem dolluhs an' ninety-eight cents. I'm a ——"

Jane started, interrupting him. "*'Sh!*" she whispered, laying a finger warningly upon her lips.

William had entered the yard at the back gate, and, approaching over the lawn, had arrived at the steps of the porch before Jane perceived him. She gave him an apprehensive look, but he passed into the house absent-mindedly, not even flinching at sight of Clematis—and Mrs. Baxter was right, William did look pale.

"I guess he didn't hear us," said Jane, when he had disappeared into the interior. "He acks awful funny!" she added, thoughtfully. "First when he was in love of Miss Pratt, he'd be mad about somep'm almost every minute he was home. Couldn't anybody say *any*thing to him but he'd just behave as if it was frightful, an' then if you'd see him out walkin' with Miss Pratt, well, he'd look like—like ——" Jane paused; her eye fell upon Clematis and by a happy inspiration she was able to complete her simile with remarkable accuracy. "He'd look like the way Clematis looks at people! That's just *exactly* the way he'd look, Genesis, when he was walkin' with Miss Pratt; an' then when he was home he got so quiet he couldn't answer questions an' wouldn't hear what anybody said to him at table or anywhere, an' papa 'd nearly almost bust. Mamma 'n' papa 'd talk an' talk about it, an' "—she lowered her voice—"an' I knew what they were talkin' about. Well, an' then he'd hardly ever get mad any more; he'd just sit in his room, an' sometimes he'd sit in there without any light, or he'd sit out in the yard all by himself all evening, maybe; an' th'other evening after I was in bed I heard 'em, an' papa said—well, this is what papa told mamma." And again lowering her voice, she proffered the quotation from her father in a tone somewhat awe-

struck: "Papa said, by Gosh! if he ever 'a' thought a son of his could make such a Word idiot of himself he almost wished we'd both been girls!"

Having completed this report in a violent whisper, Jane nodded repeatedly, for emphasis, and Genesis shook his head to show that he was as deeply impressed as she wished him to be. "I guess," she added, after a pause—"I guess Willie didn't hear anything you an' I talked about him, or clo'es, or anything."

She was mistaken in part. William had caught no reference to himself, but he had overheard something and he was now alone in his room, thinking about it almost feverishly. "A secon'-han' sto' ovuh on the avynoo, where they got swaller-tail suits all way f'um sevum dolluhs to nineteem dolluhs an' ninety-eight cents."

. . . Civilization is responsible for certain longings in the breast of man—artificial longings, but sometimes as poignant as hunger and thirst. Of these the strongest are those of the maid for the bridal veil, of the lad for long trousers, and of the youth for a tailed coat of state. To the gratification of this last, only a few of the early joys in life are comparable. Indulged youths, too rich, can know, to the unctuous full, neither the longing nor the gratification; but one such as William, in "moderate circumstances," is privileged to pant for his first evening clothes as the hart panteth after the water-brook—and sometimes, to pant in vain. Also, this was a crisis in William's life: in addition to his yearning for such apparel, he was racked by a passionate urgency.

As Jane had so precociously understood, unless he should somehow manage to obtain the proper draperies he could not go to the farewell dance for Miss Pratt. Other unequipped boys could go in their ordinary "best clothes," but William could not; for, alack, he had dressed too well too soon!

He was in desperate case.

The sorrow of the approaching great departure was but the heavier because it had been so long deferred. To William it had seemed that this flower-strewn summer could actually end no more than he could actually die, but Time had begun its awful lecture, and even Seventeen was listening.

Miss Pratt, that magic girl, was going home.

II

FATHERS FORGET

TO THE competent twenties, hundreds of miles suggesting no impossibilities, such departures may be rending, but not tragic. Implacable, the difference to Seventeen! Miss Pratt was going home, and Seventeen could not follow; it could only mourn upon the lonely shore, tracing little angelic footprints left in the sand.

To Seventeen such a departure is final; it is a vanishing.

And now it seemed possible that William might be deprived even of the last romantic consolations: of the "last waltz together," of the last, last "listening to music in the moonlight together"; of all those sacred lasts of the "last evening together."

He had pleaded strongly for a "dress-suit" as a fitting recognition of his seventeenth birthday anniversary, but he had been denied by his father with a jocularity more crushing than rigor. Since then—in particular since the arrival of Miss Pratt—Mr. Baxter's temper had been growing steadily more and more even. That is, as affected by William's social activities, it was uniformly bad. Nevertheless, after heavy brooding, William decided to make one final appeal before he resorted to measures which the necessities of despair had caused him to contemplate.

He wished to give himself every chance for a good effect; therefore, he did not act hastily, but went over what he intended to say, rehearsing it with a few appropriate gestures, and even taking some pleasure in the pathetic dignity of this performance, as revealed by occasional glances at the mirror of his dressing-table. In spite of these little alleviations, his trouble was great and all too real, for, unhappily, the previous rehearsal of an emotional scene does not prove the emotion insincere.

Descending, he found his father and mother still sitting upon the front porch. Then, standing before them, solemn-eyed, he uttered a preluding cough, and began:

"Father," he said in a loud voice, "I have come to ——"

"Dear me!" Mrs. Baxter exclaimed, not perceiving that she was

interrupting an intended oration. "Willie, you *do* look pale! Sit down, poor child; you oughtn't to walk so much in this heat."

"Father," William repeated. "Fath ——"

"I suppose you got her safely home from church," Mr. Baxter said. "She might have been carried off by footpads if you three boys hadn't been along to take care of her!"

But William persisted heroically. "Father ——" he said. "Father, I have come to ——"

"What on earth's the matter with you?" Mr. Baxter ceased to fan himself; Mrs. Baxter stopped rocking, and both stared, for it had dawned upon them that something unusual was beginning to take place.

William backed to the start and tried it again. "Father, I have come to ——" He paused and gulped, evidently expecting to be interrupted, but both of his parents remained silent, regarding him with puzzled surprise. "Father," he began once more, "I have come—I have come to—to place before you something I think it's your duty as my father to undertake, and I have thought over this step before laying it before you."

"My soul!" said Mr. Baxter, under his breath. "My soul!"

"At my age," William continued, swallowing, and fixing his earnest eyes upon the roof of the porch, to avoid the disconcerting stare of his father—"at my age there's some things that ought to be done and some things that ought not to be done. If you asked me what I thought *ought* to be done, there is only one answer: When anybody as old as I am has to go out among other young men his own age that already got one, like anyway half of them *have*, who I go with, and their fathers have already taken such a step, because they felt it was the only right thing to do, because at my age and the young men I go with's age, it *is* the only right thing to do, because that is something nobody could deny, at my age ——" Here William drew a long breath, and, deciding to abandon that sentence as irrevocably tangled, began another: "I have thought over this step, because there comes a time to every young man when they must lay a step before their father before something happens that they would be sorry for. I have thought this undertaking over, and I am certain it would be your honest duty ——"

"My soul!" gasped Mr. Baxter. "I thought I knew you pretty well,

but you talk like a stranger to *me*! What is all this? What do you *want*?"

"A dress-suit!" said William.

He had intended to say a great deal more before coming to the point, but, although through nervousness he had lost some threads of his rehearsed plan, it seemed to him that he was getting along well and putting his case with some distinction and power. He was surprised and hurt, therefore, to hear his father utter a wordless shout in a tone of wondering derision.

"I have more to say ——" William began.

But Mr. Baxter cut him off. "A dress-suit!" he cried. "Well, I'm glad you were talking about *something*, because I honestly thought it must be too much sun!"

At this, the troubled William brought his eyes down from the porch roof and forgot his rehearsal. He lifted his hand appealingly. "Father," he said, "I *got* to have one!"

"'Got to'!" Mr. Baxter laughed a laugh that chilled the supplicant through and through. "At your age I thought I was lucky if I had *any* suit that was fit to be seen in. You're too young, Willie. I don't want you to get your mind on such stuff, and if I have my way, you won't have a dress-suit for four years more, anyhow."

"Father, I *got* to have one. I got to have one right away!" The urgency in William's voice was almost tearful. "I don't ask you to have it made, or to go to expensive tailors, but there's plenty of good ready-made ones that only cost about forty dollars; they're advertised in the paper. Father, wouldn't you spend just forty dollars? I'll pay it back when I'm in business. I'll work ——"

Mr. Baxter waved all this aside. "It's not the money. It's the principle that I'm standing for, and I don't intend ——"

"Father, *won't* you do it?"

"No, I will not!"

William saw that sentence had been passed and all appeals for a new trial denied. He choked, and rushed into the house without more ado.

"Poor boy!" his mother said.

"Poor boy nothing!" fumed Mr. Baxter. "He's about lost his mind over that Miss Pratt. Think of his coming out here and starting a regular debating society declamation before his mother and father!

Why, I never heard anything like it in my life! I don't like to hurt his feelings, and I'd give him anything I could afford that would do him any good, but all he wants it for now is to splurge around in at this party before that little yellow-haired girl! I guess he can wear the kind of clothes most of the other boys wear—the kind *I* wore at parties—and never thought of wearing anything else. What's the world getting to be like? Seventeen years old and throws a fit because he can't have a dress-suit!"

Mrs. Baxter looked thoughtful. "But—but suppose he felt he couldn't go to the dance unless he wore one, poor boy ——"

"All the better," said Mr. Baxter, firmly. "Do him good to keep away and get his mind on something else."

"Of course," she suggested, with some timidity, "forty dollars isn't a great deal of money, and a ready-made suit, just to begin with ——"

Naturally, Mr. Baxter perceived whither she was drifting. "Forty dollars isn't a thousand," he interrupted, "but what you want to throw it away for? One reason a boy of seventeen oughtn't to have evening clothes is the way he behaves with *any* clothes. Forty dollars! Why, only this summer he sat down on Jane's open paint-box, twice in one week!"

"Well—Miss Pratt *is* going away, and the dance will be her last night. I'm afraid it would really hurt him to miss it. I remember once, before we were engaged—that evening before papa took me abroad, and you ——"

"It's no use, mamma," he said. "We were both in the twenties—why, *I* was six years older than Willie, even then. There's no comparison at all. I'll let him order a dress-suit on his twenty-first birthday and not a minute before. I don't believe in it, and I intend to see that he gets all this stuff out of his system. He's got to learn some hard sense!"

Mrs. Baxter shook her head doubtfully, but she said no more. Perhaps she regretted a little that she had caused Mr. Baxter's evening clothes to be so expansively enlarged—for she looked rather regretful. She also looked rather incomprehensible, not to say cryptic, during the long silence which followed, and Mr. Baxter resumed his rocking, unaware of the fixity of gaze which his wife maintained upon him—a thing the most loyal will do sometimes.

The incomprehensible look disappeared before long; but the re-

gretful one was renewed in the mother's eyes whenever she caught glimpses of her son, that day, and at the table, where William's manner was gentle—even toward his heartless father.

Underneath that gentleness, the harried self of William was no longer debating a desperate resolve, but had fixed upon it, and on the following afternoon Jane chanced to be a witness of some resultant actions. She came to her mother with an account of them.

"Mamma, what you s'pose Willie wants of those two ole market-baskets that were down cellar?"

"Why, Jane?"

"Well, he carried 'em in his room, an' then he saw me lookin': an' he said, 'G'way from here!' an' shut the door. He looks so funny! What's he want of those ole baskets, mamma?"

"I don't know. Perhaps he doesn't even know, himself, Jane."

But William did know, definitely. He had set the baskets upon chairs, and now, with pale determination, he was proceeding to fill them. When his task was completed the two baskets contained:

One "heavy-weight winter suit of clothes."
One "light-weight summer suit of clothes."
One cap.
One straw hat.
Two pairs of white flannel trousers.
Two Madras shirts.
Two flannel shirts.
Two silk shirts.
Seven soft collars.
Three silk neckties.
One crocheted tie.
Eight pairs of socks.
One pair of patent-leather shoes.
One pair of tennis-shoes.
One overcoat.
Some underwear.

One two-foot shelf of books, consisting of several sterling works upon mathematics, in a damaged condition; five of Shakespeare's plays, expurgated for schools and colleges, and also damaged; a work upon political economy, and another upon the science of physics; *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary; How to Enter a Drawing-Room*

and Five Hundred Other Hints; Witty Sayings from Here and There; Lorna Doone; Quentin Durward; The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, a very old copy of *Moths*, and a small Bible.

William spread handkerchiefs upon the two over-bulging cargoes, that their nature might not be disclosed to the curious, and, after listening a moment at his door, took the baskets, one upon each arm, then went quickly down the stairs and out of the house, out of the yard, and into the alley—by which route he had modestly chosen to travel.

. . . After an absence of about two hours he returned empty-handed and anxious. "Mother, I want to speak to you," he said, addressing Mrs. Baxter in a voice which clearly proved the strain of these racking days. "I want to speak to you about something important."

"Yes, Willie?"

"Please send Jane away. I can't talk about important things with a child in the room."

Jane naturally wished to stay, since he was going to say something important. "Mamma, do I *haf* to go?"

"Just a few minutes, dear."

Jane walked submissively out of the door, leaving it open behind her. Then, having gone about six feet farther, she halted and, preserving a breathless silence, consoled herself for her banishment by listening to what was said, hearing it all as satisfactorily as if she had remained in the room. Quiet, thoughtful children, like Jane, avail themselves of these little pleasures oftener than is suspected.

"Mother," said William, with great intensity, "I want to ask you please to lend me three dollars and sixty cents."

"What for, Willie?"

"Mother, I just ask you to lend me three dollars and sixty cents."

"But what *for*?"

"Mother, I don't feel I can discuss it any; I simply ask you: Will you lend me three dollars and sixty cents?"

Mrs. Baxter laughed gently. "I don't think I could, Willie, but certainly I should want to know what for."

"Mother, I am going on eighteen years of age, and when I ask for a small sum of money like three dollars and sixty cents I think I

might be trusted to know how to use it for my own good without having to answer questions like a ch ——"

"Why, Willie," she exclaimed, "you ought to have plenty of money of your own!"

"Of course I ought," he agreed, warmly. "If you'd ask father to give me a regular allow ——"

"No, no; I mean you ought to have plenty left out of that old junk and furniture I let you sell last month. You had over nine dollars!"

"That was five weeks ago," William explained, wearily.

"But you certainly must have some of it left. Why, it was *more* than nine dollars, I believe! I think it was nearer ten. Surely you haven't ——"

"Ye Gods!" cried the goaded William. "A person going on eighteen years old ought to be able to spend nine dollars in five weeks without everybody's acting like it was a crime! Mother, I ask you the simple question: Will you *please* lend me three dollars and sixty cents?"

"I don't think I ought to, dear. I'm sure your father wouldn't wish me to, unless you'll tell me what you want it for. In fact, I won't consider it at all unless you do tell me."

"You won't do it?" he quavered.

She shook her head gently. "You see, dear, I'm afraid the reason you don't tell me is because you know that I wouldn't give it to you if I knew what you wanted it for."

This perfect diagnosis of the case so disheartened him that after a few monosyllabic efforts to continue the conversation with dignity he gave it up, and left in such a preoccupation with despondency that he passed the surprised Jane in the hall without suspecting what she had been doing.

That evening, after dinner, he addressed to his father an impassioned appeal for three dollars and sixty cents, laying such stress of pathos on his principal argument that if he couldn't have a dress-suit, at least he ought to be given three dollars and sixty *cents* (the emphasis is William's) that Mr. Baxter was moved in the direction of consent—but not far enough. "I'd like to let you have it, Willie," he said, excusing himself for refusal, "but your mother felt *she* oughtn't to do it unless you'd say what you wanted it for, and I'm

sure she wouldn't like me to do it. I can't let you have it unless you get her to say she wants me to."

Thus advised, the unfortunate made another appeal to his mother the next day, and, having brought about no relaxation of the situation, again petitioned his father, on the following evening. So it went, the torn and driven William turning from parent to parent; and surely, since the world began, the special sum of three dollars and sixty cents has never been so often mentioned in any one house and in the same space of time as it was in the house of the Baxters during Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of that oppressive week.

But on Friday William disappeared after breakfast and did not return to lunch.

III

CLOTHES MAKE THE MAN

Mrs. Baxter was troubled. During the afternoon she glanced often from the open window of the room where she had gone to sew, but the peaceful neighborhood continued to be peaceful, and no sound of the harassed footsteps of William echoed from the pavement. However, she saw Genesis arrive (in his weekday costume) to do some weeding, and Jane immediately skip forth for mingled purposes of observation and conversation.

"What *do* they say?" thought Mrs. Baxter, observing that both Jane and Genesis were unusually animated. But for once that perplexity was to be dispersed. After an exciting half-hour Jane came flying to her mother, breathless.

"Mamma," she cried, "I know where Willie is! Genesis told me, 'cause he saw him, an' he talked to him while he was doin' it."

"Doing what? Where?"

"Mamma, listen! What you think Willie's doin'? I bet you can't g ——"

"Jane!" Mrs. Baxter spoke sharply. "Tell me what Genesis said, at once."

"Yes'm. Willie's sittin' in a lumber-yard that Genesis comes by

on his way from over on the avynoo where all the colored people live—an' he's countin' knot-holes in shingles."

"He is *what*?"

"Yes'm. Genesis knows all about it, because he was thinkin' of doin' it himself, only he says it would be too slow. This is the way it is, mamma. Listen, mamma, because this is just exackly the way it is. Well, this lumber-yard man got into some sort of a fuss because he bought millions an' millions of shingles, mamma, that had too many knots in, an' the man don't want to pay for 'em, or else the store where he bought 'em won't take 'em back, an' they got to prove how many shingles are bad shingles, or somep'm, an' anyway, mamma, that's what Willie's doin'. Every time he comes to a bad shingle, mamma, he puts it somewheres else, or somep'm like that, mamma, an' every time he's put a thousand bad shingles in this other place they give him six cents. He gets the six cents to keep, mamma—an' that's what he's been doin' all day!"

"Good gracious!"

"Oh, but that's nothing, mamma—just you wait till you hear the rest. *That* part of it isn't anything a *tall*, mamma! You wouldn't hardly notice that part of it if you knew the other part of it, mamma. Why, that isn't *anything*!" Jane made demonstrations of scorn for the insignificant information already imparted.

"Jane!"

"Yes'm?"

"I want to know everything Genesis told you," said her mother, "and I want you to tell it as quickly as you can."

"Well, I *am* tellin' it, mamma!" Jane protested. "I'm just *beginning* to tell it. I can't tell it unless there's a beginning, can I? How could there be *anything* unless you had to begin it, mamma?"

"Try your best to go on, Jane!"

"Yes'm. Well, Genesis says —— Mamma!" Jane interrupted herself with a little outcry. "Oh! I bet *that's* what he had those two market-baskets for! Yes, sir! That's just what he did! An' then he needed the rest o' the money an' you an' papa wouldn't give him any, an' so he began countin' shingles to-day 'cause to-night's the night of the party an' he just *hass* to have it!"

Mrs. Baxter, who had risen to her feet, recalled the episode of the baskets and sank into a chair. "How did Genesis know Willie wanted

forty dollars, and if Willie's pawned something how did Genesis know *that*? Did Willie tell Gen ——"

"Oh no, mamma, Willie didn't want forty dollars—only fourteen!"

"But he couldn't get even the cheapest ready-made dress-suit for fourteen dollars."

"Mamma, you're gettin' it all mixed up!" Jane cried. "Listen, mamma! Genesis knows all about a second-hand store over on the avynoo; an' it keeps 'most everything, an' Genesis says it's the nicest store! It keeps waiter suits all the way up to nineteen dollars and ninety-nine cents. Well, an' Genesis wants to get one of those suits, so he goes in there all the time, an' talks to the man an' bargains an' bargains with him, 'cause Genesis says this man is the bargainest man in the wide worl', mamma! That's what Genesis says. Well, an' so this man's name is One-eye Beljus, mamma. That's his name, an' Genesis says so. Well, an' so this man that Genesis told me about, that keeps the store—I mean One-eye Beljus, mamma—well, One-eye Beljus had Willie's name written down in a book, an' he knew Genesis worked for fam'lies that have boys like Willie in 'em, an' this morning One-eye Beljus showed Genesis Willie's name written down in this book, an' One-eye Beljus asked Genesis if he knew anybody by that name an' all about him. Well, an' so at first Genesis pretended he was tryin' to remember, because he wanted to find out what Willie went there for. Genesis didn't tell any stories, mamma; he just pretended he couldn't remember, an' so, well, One-eye Beljus kept talkin' an' pretty soon Genesis found out all about it. One-eye Beljus said Willie came in there an' tried on the coat of one of those waiter suits ——"

"Oh no!" gasped Mrs. Baxter.

"Yes'm, an' One-eye Beljus said it was the only one that would fit Willie, an' One-eye Beljus told Willie that suit was worth fourteen dollars, an' Willie said he didn't have any money, but he'd like to trade something else for it. Well, an' so One-eye Beljus said this was an awful fine suit an' the only one he had that had b'longed to a white gentleman. Well, an' so they bargained, an' bargained, an' bargained, an' *bargained*! An' then, well, an' so at last Willie said he'd go an' get everything that b'longed to him, an' One-eye Beljus could pick out enough to make fourteen dollars' worth, an' then Willie could have the suit. Well, an' so Willie came home an' put

everything he had that b'longed to him into those two baskets, mamma—that's just what he did, 'cause Genesis says he told One-eye Beljus it was everything that b'longed to him, an' that would take two baskets, mamma. Well, then, an' so he told One-eye Beljus to pick out fourteen dollars' worth, an' One-eye Beljus ast Willie if he didn't have a watch. Well, Willie took out his watch, an' One-eye Beljus said it was an awful bad watch, but he would put it in for a dollar; an' he said, 'I'll put your necktie pin in for forty cents more,' so Willie took it out of his necktie; an' then One-eye Beljus said it would take all the things in the baskets to make I forget how much, mamma, an' the watch would be a dollar more, an' the pin forty cents, an' that would leave just three dollars an' sixty cents more for Willie to pay before he could get the suit."

Mrs. Baxter's face had become suffused with high color, but she wished to know all that Genesis had said, and, mastering her feelings with an effort, she told Jane to proceed—a command obeyed after Jane had taken several long breaths.

"Well, an' so the worst part of it is, Genesis says, it's because that suit is haunted."

"What!"

"Yes'm," said Jane, solemnly; "Genesis says it's haunted. Genesis says everybody over on the avynoo knows all about that suit, an' he says that's why One-eye Beljus never could sell it before. Genesis says One-eye Beljus tried to sell it to a colored man for three dollars, but the man said he wouldn't put it on for three hunderd dollars, an' Genesis says *he* wouldn't, either, because it belonged to a Dago waiter that—that ——" Jane's voice sank to a whisper of unctuous horror. She was having a wonderful time! "Mamma, this Dago waiter, he lived over on the avynoo, an' he took a case-knife he'd sharpened—*an' he cut a lady's head off with it!*"

Mrs. Baxter screamed faintly.

"An' he got hung, mamma! If you don't believe it, you can ask One-eye Beljus—I guess *he* knows! An' you can ask ——"

"Hush!"

"An' he sold this suit to One-eye Beljus when he was in jail, mamma. He sold it to him before he got hung, mamma."

"Hush, Jane!"

But Jane couldn't hush now. "An' he had that suit on when he

cut the lady's head off, mamma, an' that's why it's haunted. They cleaned it all up excep' a few little spots of bl ——"

"*Jane!*" shouted her mother. "You must not talk about such things, and Genesis mustn't tell you stories of that sort!"

"Well, how could he help it, if he told me about Willie?" Jane urged, reasonably.

"Never mind! Did that crazy ch —— Did Willie *leave* the baskets in that dreadful place?"

"Yes'm—an' his watch an' pin," Jane informed her, impressively. "An' One-eye Beljus wanted to know if Genesis knew Willie, because One-eye Beljus wanted to know if Genesis thought Willie could get the three dollars an' sixty cents, an' One-eye Beljus wanted to know if Genesis thought he could get anything more out of him besides that. He told Genesis he hadn't told Willie he *could* have the suit, after all; he just told him he *thought* he could, but he wouldn't say for certain till he brought him the three dollars an' sixty cents. So Willie left all his things there, an' his watch an' ——"

"That will do!" Mrs. Baxter's voice was sharper than it had ever been in Jane's recollection. "I don't need to hear any more—and I don't *want* to hear any more!"

Jane was justly aggrieved. "But, mamma, it isn't *my* fault!"

Mrs. Baxter's lips parted to speak, but she checked herself. "Fault?" she said, gravely. "I wonder whose fault it really is!"

And with that she went hurriedly into William's room and made a brief inspection of his clothes-closet and dressing table. Then, as Jane watched her in awed silence, she strode to the window, and called, loudly:

"Genesis!"

"Yes'm?" came the voice from below.

"Go to that lumber-yard where Mr. William is at work and bring him here to me at once. If he declines to come, tell him ——" Her voice broke oddly; she choked, but Jane could not decide with what emotion. "Tell him—tell him I ordered you to use force if necessary! Hurry!"

"*Yes'm!*"

Jane ran to the window in time to see Genesis departing seriously through the back gate.

"Mamma ——"

"Don't talk to me now, Jane," Mrs. Baxter said, crisply. "I want you to go down in the yard, and when Willie comes tell him I'm waiting for him here in his own room. And don't come with him, Jane. Run!"

"Yes, mamma." Jane was pleased with this appointment; she anxiously desired to be the first to see how Willie "looked."

. . . He looked flurried and flustered and breathless, and there were blisters upon the reddened palms of his hands. "What on earth's the matter, mother?" he asked, as he stood panting before her. "Genesis said something was wrong, and he said you told him to hit me if I wouldn't come."

"Oh *no*!" she cried. "I only meant I thought perhaps you wouldn't obey any ordinary message ——"

"Well, well, it doesn't matter, but please hurry and say what you want to, because I got to get back and ——"

"No," Mrs. Baxter said, quietly, "you're not going back to count any more shingles, Willie. How much have you earned?"

He swallowed, but spoke bravely. "Thirty-six cents. But I've been getting lots faster the last two hours and there's a good deal of time before six o'clock. Mother ——"

"No," she said. "You're going over to that horrible place where you left your clothes and your watch and all those other things in the two baskets, and you're going to bring them home at once."

"Mother!" he cried, aghast. "Who told you?"

"It doesn't matter. You don't want your father to find out, do you? Then get those things back here as quickly as you can. They'll have to be fumigated after being in that den."

"They've never been out of the baskets," he protested, hotly, "except just to be looked at. They're *my* things, mother, and I had a right to do what I needed to with 'em, didn't I?" His utterance became difficult. "You and father just *can't* understand—and you won't do anything to help me ——"

"Willie, you can go to the party," she said, gently. "You didn't need those frightful clothes at all."

"I do!" he cried. "I *got* to have 'em! I *can't* go in my day clo'es! There's a reason you wouldn't understand why I can't. I just *can't*!"

"Yes," she said, "you can go to the party."

"I can't, either! Not unless you give me three dollars and twenty-

four cents, or unless I can get back to the lumber-yard and earn the rest before ——"

"No!" And the warm color that had rushed over Mrs. Baxter during Jane's sensational recital returned with a vengeance. Her eyes flashed. "If you'd rather I sent a policeman for those baskets, I'll send one. I should prefer to do it—much! And to have that rascal arrested. If you don't want me to send a policeman you can go for them yourself, but you must start within ten minutes, because if you don't I'll telephone headquarters. Ten minutes, Willie, and I mean it!"

He cried out, protesting. She would make him a thing of scorn forever and soil his honor, if she sent a policeman. Mr. Beljus was a fair and honest tradesman, he explained, passionately, and had not made the approaches in this matter. Also the garments in question, though not entirely new, nor of the highest mode, were of good material and in splendid condition. Unmistakably they were evening clothes, and such a bargain at fourteen dollars that William would guarantee to sell them for twenty after he had worn them this one evening. Mr. Beljus himself had said that he would not even think of letting them go at fourteen to anybody else, and as for the two poor baskets of worn and useless articles offered in exchange, and a bent scarf-pin and a worn-out old silver watch that had belonged to great-uncle Ben—why, the ten dollars and forty cents allowed upon them was beyond all ordinary liberality; it was almost charity. There was only one place in town where evening clothes were rented, and the suspicious persons in charge had insisted that William obtain from his father a guarantee to insure the return of the garments in perfect condition. So that was hopeless. And wasn't it better, also, to wear clothes which had known only one previous occupant (as was the case with Mr. Beljus's offering) than to hire what chance hundreds had hired? Finally, there was only one thing to be considered and this was the fact that William *had* to have those clothes!

"Six minutes," said Mrs. Baxter, glancing implacably at her watch. "When it's ten I'll telephone."

And the end of it was, of course, victory for the woman—victory both moral and physical. Three-quarters of an hour later she was unburdening the contents of the two baskets and putting the things back in place, illuminating these actions with an expression of strong

distaste—in spite of broken assurances that Mr. Beljus had not more than touched any of the articles offered to him for valuation.

. . . At dinner, which was unusually early that evening, Mrs. Baxter did not often glance toward her son; she kept her eyes from that white face and spent most of her time in urging upon Mr. Baxter that he should be prompt in dressing for a card-club meeting which he and she were to attend that evening. These admonitions of hers were continued so pressingly that Mr. Baxter, after protesting that there was no use in being a whole hour too early, groaningly went to dress without even reading his paper.

William had retired to his own room, where he lay upon his bed in the darkness. He heard the evening noises of the house faintly through the closed door: voices and the clatter of metal and china from the far-away kitchen, Jane's laugh in the hall, the opening and closing of the doors. Then his father seemed to be in distress about something. William heard him complaining to Mrs. Baxter, and though the words were indistinct, the tone was vigorously plaintive. Mrs. Baxter laughed and appeared to make light of his troubles, whatever they were—and presently their footsteps were audible from the stairway; the front door closed emphatically, and they were gone.

Everything was quiet now. The open window showed as a greenish oblong set in black, and William knew that in a little while there would come through the stillness of that window the distant sound of violins. That was a moment he dreaded with a dread that ached. And as he lay on his dreary bed he thought of brightly lighted rooms where other boys were dressing eagerly, faces and hair shining, hearts beating high—boys who would possess this last evening and the "last waltz together," the last smile and the last sigh.

It did not once enter his mind that he could go to the dance in his "best suit," or that possibly the other young people at the party would be too busy with their own affairs to notice particularly what he wore. It was the unquestionable and granite fact, to his mind, that the whole derisive World would know the truth about his earlier appearances in his father's clothes. And that was a form of ruin not to be faced. In the protective darkness and seclusion of William's bedroom, it is possible that smarting eyes relieved themselves by blinking rather energetically; it is even possible that there was a

minute damp spot upon the pillow. Seventeen cannot always manage the little boy yet alive under all the coverings.

Now arrived that moment he had most painfully anticipated, and dance-music drifted on the night;—but there came a tapping upon his door and a soft voice spoke.

"Will-ee?"

With a sharp exclamation William swung his legs over the edge of the bed and sat up. Of all things he desired not, he desired no conversation with, or on the part of, Jane. But he had forgotten to lock his door—the handle turned, and a dim little figure marched in.

"Willie, Adelia's goin' to put me to bed."

"You g'way from here," he said, huskily. "I haven't got time to talk to you. I'm busy."

"Well, you can wait a minute, can't you?" she asked, reasonably. "I haf to tell you a joke on mamma."

"I don't want to hear any jokes!"

"Well, I *haf* to tell you this one 'cause she told me to! Oh!" Jane clapped her hand over her mouth and jumped up and down, offering a fantastic silhouette against the light of the open door. "Oh, oh, *oh*!"

"What's matter?"

"She said I mustn't, *mustn't* tell that she told me to tell! My goodness! I forgot that! Mamma took me off alone right after dinner, an' she told me to tell you this joke on her a little after she an' papa had left the house, but she said, 'Above all *things*,' she said, '*don't* let Willie know *I* said to tell him.' That's just what she said, an' here that's the very first thing I had to go an' do!"

"Well, what of it?"

Jane quieted down. The pangs of her remorse were lost in her love of sensationalism, and her voice sank to the thrilling whisper which it was one of her greatest pleasures to use. "Did you hear what a fuss papa was makin' when he was dressin' for the card-party?"

"*I* don't care if ——"

"He had to go in his reg'lar clo'es!" whispered Jane, triumphantly. "An' this is the joke on mamma: you know that tailor that let papa's dress-suit 'way, 'way out; well, mamma thinks that tailor

must think she's crazy, or somep'm, 'cause she took papa's dress-suit to him last Monday to get it pressed for this card-party, an' she guesses he must of understood her to tell him to do lots besides just pressin' it. Anyway, he went an' altered it, an' he took it 'way, 'way *in* again; an this afternoon when it came back it was even tighter'n what it was in the first place, an' papa couldn't *begin* to get into it! Well, an' so it's all pressed an' ev'ything, an' she stopped on the way out, an' whispered to me that she'd got so upset over the joke on her that she couldn't remember where she put it when she took it out o' papa's room after he gave up tryin' to get inside of it. An' that," cried Jane—"that's the funniest thing of all! Why, it's layin' right on her bed this very minute!"

In one bound William leaped through the open door. Two seconds sufficed for his passage through the hall to his mother's bedroom—and there, neatly spread upon the lace coverlet and brighter than coronation robes, fairer than Joseph's holy coat, It lay!

HOW TOM SAWYER WHITEWASHED THE FENCE [1]

Mark Twain

SATURDAY morning was come, and all the summer world was bright and fresh, and brimming with life. There was a song in every heart; and if the heart was young, the music issued at the lips. There was cheer in every face and a spring in every step. The locust trees were in bloom and the fragrance of the blossoms filled the air. Cardiff Hill, beyond the village and above it, was green with vegetation, and it lay just far enough away to seem a Delectable Land, dreamy, reposeful, and inviting.

Tom appeared on the sidewalk with a bucket of whitewash and a long-handled brush. He surveyed the fence, and all gladness left

[1] Reprinted from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, by Mark Twain, used with the permission of Harper & Brothers.

PENNSYLVANIA MILITARY COLLEGE
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him and a deep melancholy settled down upon his spirit. Thirty yards of board fence nine feet high. Life to him seemed hollow, and existence but a burden. Sighing, he dipped his brush and passed it along the topmost plank; repeated the operation; did it again; compared the insignificant whitewashed streak with the far-reaching continent of unwhitewashed fence, and sat down on a tree-box discouraged. Jim came skipping out at the gate with a tin pail, and singing "Buffalo Gals." Bringing water from the town pump had always been hateful work in Tom's eyes before, but now it did not strike him so. He remembered that there was company at the pump. White, mulatto, and negro boys and girls were always waiting their turns, resting, trading playthings, quarreling, fighting, skylarking. And he remembered that although the pump was only a hundred and fifty yards off, Jim never got back with a bucket of water under an hour—and even then somebody generally had to go after him. Tom said:

"Say, Jim, I'll fetch the water if you'll whitewash some."

Jim shook his head and said:

"Can't, Mars Tom. Ole missis, she tole me I got to go an' git dis water an' not stop foolin' roun' wid anybody. She says she spec' Mars Tom gwine to ax me to whitewash, an' so she tole me go 'long an' 'tend to my own business—she 'lowed *she'd* 'tend to de whitewashin'."

"Oh, never you mind what she said, Jim. That's the way she always talks. Gimme the bucket—I won't be gone only a minute. *She* won't ever know."

"Oh, I dasn't, Mars Tom. Ole missis she'd take an' tar de head off'n me. 'Deed she would."

"*She!* She never licks anybody—whacks 'em over the head with her thimble—and who cares for that, I'd like to know. She talks awful, but talk don't hurt—anyways it don't if she don't cry. Jim, I'll give you a marvel. I'll give you a white alley!"

Jim began to waver.

"White alley, Jim! And it's a bully taw."

"My! Dat's a mighty gay marvel, *I* tell you! But Mars Tom, I's powerful 'fraid ole missis ——"

"And besides, if you will I'll show you my sore toe."

Jim was only human—this attraction was too much for him. He

put down his pail, took the white alley, and bent over the toe with absorbing interest while the bandage was being unwound. In another moment he was flying down the street with his pail and a tingling rear, Tom was whitewashing with vigor, and Aunt Polly was retiring from the field with a slipper in her hand and triumph in her eye.

But Tom's energy did not last. He began to think of the fun he had planned for this day, and his sorrows multiplied. Soon the free boys would come tripping along on all sorts of delicious expeditions, and they would make a world of fun of him for having to work—the very thought of it burned him like fire. He got out his worldly wealth and examined it—bits of toys, marbles, and trash; enough to buy an exchange of *work*, maybe, but not half enough to buy so much as half an hour of pure freedom. So he returned his straitened means to his pocket, and gave up the idea of trying to buy the boys. At this dark and hopeless moment an inspiration burst upon him! Nothing less than a great, magnificent inspiration.

He took up his brush and went tranquilly to work. Ben Rogers hove in sight presently—the very boy, of all boys, whose ridicule he had been dreading. Ben's gait was the hop-skip-and-jump—proof enough that his heart was light and his anticipations high. He was eating an apple, and giving a long, melodious whoop, at intervals, followed by a deep-toned ding-dong, ding-dong-dong, for he was personating a steamboat. As he drew near, he slackened speed, took the middle of the street, leaned far over to starboard and rounded-to ponderously and with laborious pomp and circumstance—for he was personating the *Big Missouri*, and considered himself to be drawing nine feet of water. He was boat and captain and engine-bells combined, so he had to imagine himself standing on his own hurricane-deck giving the orders and executing them:

"Stop her, sir! Ting-a-ling-ling!" The headway ran almost out and he drew up slowly toward the sidewalk.

"Ship up to back! Ting-a-ling-ling!" His arms straightened and stiffened down his sides.

"Set her back on the stabboard! Ting-a-ling-ling! Chow! ch-chow-wow! Chow!" His right hand, meantime, describing stately circles—for it was representing a forty-foot wheel.

"Let her go back on the labboard! Ting-a-ling-ling! Chow-ch-chow-chow!" The left hand began to describe circles.

"Stop the stabboard! Ting-a-ling-ling! Stop the labboard! Come ahead on the stabboard! Stop her! Let your outside turn over slow! Ting-a-ling-ling! Chow-ow-ow! Get out that head-line! *Lively* now! Come—out with your spring-line—what're you about there? Take a turn around that stump with the bight of it! Stand by that stage, now—let her go! Done with the engines, sir! Ting-a-ling-ling! *Sh't! Sh't! Sh't!*" (trying the gauge-cocks).

Tom went on whitewashing—paid no attention to the steamboat. Ben stared a moment and then said:

"Hi-*yi! You're* up a stump, ain't you?"

No answer. Tom surveyed his last touch with the eye of an artist; then he gave his brush another gentle sweep and surveyed the result, as before. Ben ranged up alongside of him. Tom's mouth watered for the apple, but he stuck to his work. Ben said:

"Hello, old chap, you got to work, hey?"

Tom wheeled suddenly and said:

"Why, it's you, Ben! I warn't noticing."

"Say—I'm going in a-swimming, *I* am. Don't you wish *you* could? But of course you'd druther *work*—wouldn't you? Course you would!"

Tom contemplated the boy a bit, and said:

"What do you call work?"

"Why, ain't *that* work?"

Tom resumed his whitewashing, and answered carelessly:

"Well, maybe it is, and maybe it ain't. All I know, is, it suits Tom Sawyer."

"Oh, come, now, you don't mean to let on that you *like* it?"

The brush continued to move.

"Like it? Well, I don't see why I oughtn't to like it. Does a boy get a chance to whitewash a fence every day?"

That put the thing in a new light. Ben stopped nibbling his apple. Tom swept his brush daintily back and forth—stepped back to note the effect—added a touch here and there—criticized the effect again—Ben watching every move and getting more and more interested, more and more absorbed. Presently he said:

"Say, Tom, let *me* whitewash a little."

Tom considered, was about to consent; but he altered his mind:

"No—no—I reckon it wouldn't hardly do, Ben. You see, Aunt Polly's awful particular about this fence—right here on the street, you know—but if it was the back fence, I wouldn't mind and *she* wouldn't. Yes, she's awful particular about this fence; it's got to be done very careful; I reckon there ain't one boy in a thousand, maybe two thousand, that can do it the way it's got to be done."

"No—is that so? Oh, come, now—lemme just try. Only just a little —I'd let *you*, if you was me, Tom."

"Ben, I'd like to, honest injun; but Aunt Polly—well, Jim wanted to do it, but she wouldn't let him; Sid wanted to do it, and she wouldn't let Sid. Now, don't you see how I'm fixed? If you was to tackle this fence and anything was to happen to it——"

"Oh, shucks, I'll be just as careful. Now lemme try. Say—I'll give you the core of my apple."

"Well, here—No, Ben, now don't. I'm afeard——"

"I'll give you *all* of it!"

Tom gave up the brush with reluctance in his face, but alacrity in his heart. And while the late steamer *Big Missouri* worked and sweated in the sun, the retired artist sat on a barrel in the shade close by, dangled his legs, munched his apple, and planned the slaughter of more innocents. There was no lack of material; boys happened along every little while; they came to jeer, but remained to whitewash. By the time Ben was fagged out, Tom had traded the next chance to Billy Fisher for a kite in good repair; and when *he* played out, Johnny Miller bought in for a dead rat and a string to swing it with—and so on, hour after hour. And when the middle of the afternoon came, from being a poor poverty-stricken boy in the morning, Tom was literally rolling in wealth. He had, besides the things before mentioned, twelve marbles, part of a jew's-harp, a piece of blue bottle glass to look through, a spool cannon, a key that wouldn't unlock anything, a fragment of chalk, a glass stopper of a decanter, a tin soldier, a couple of tadpoles, six firecrackers, a kitten with only one eye, a brass door-knob, a dog-collar—but no dog—the handle of a knife, four pieces of orange-peel, and a dilapidated old window-sash.

He had had a nice, good, idle time all the while—plenty of com-

pany—and the fence had three coats of whitewash on it! If he hadn't run out of whitewash, he would have bankrupted every boy in the village.

HOW I EDITED AN AGRICULTURAL PAPER[1]

Mark Twain

I DID not take temporary editorship of an agricultural paper without misgivings. Neither would a landsman take command of a ship without misgivings. But I was in circumstances that made the salary an object. The regular editor of the paper was going off for a holiday, and I accepted the terms he offered, and took his place.

The sensation of being at work again was luxurious, and I wrought all the week with unflagging pleasure. We went to press, and I waited a day with some solicitude to see whether my effort was going to attract any notice. As I left the office, toward sundown, a group of men and boys at the foot of the stairs dispersed with one impulse, and gave me passageway, and I heard one or two of them say: "That's him!" I was naturally pleased by this incident. The next morning I found a similar group at the foot of the stairs, and scattering couples and individuals standing here and there in the street, and over the way, watching me with interest. The group separated and fell back as I approached, and I heard a man say, "Look at his eye!" I pretended not to observe the notice I was attracting, but secretly I was pleased with it, and was purposing to write an account of it to my aunt. I went up the short flight of stairs, and heard cheery voices and a ringing laugh as I drew near the door, which I opened, and caught a glimpse of two young rural-looking men, whose faces blanched and lengthened when they saw me, and then they both plunged through the window with a great crash. I was surprised.

In about half an hour an old gentleman, with a flowing beard and a fine but rather austere face, entered, and sat down at my invita-

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tion. He seemed to have something on his mind. He took off his hat and set it on the floor, and got out of it a red silk handkerchief and a copy of our paper.

He put the paper on his lap, and while he polished his spectacles with his handkerchief, he said, "Are you the new editor?"

I said I was.

"Have you ever edited an agricultural paper before?"

"No," I said; "this is my first attempt."

"Very likely. Have you had any experience in agriculture practically?"

"No; I believe I have not."

"Some instinct told me so," said the old gentleman, putting on his spectacles, and looking over them at me with asperity, while he folded his paper into a convenient shape. "I wish to read you what must have made me have that instinct. It was this editorial. Listen, and see if it was you that wrote it:

Turnips should never be pulled, it injures them. It is much better to send a boy up and let him shake the tree.

"Now, what do you think of that?—for I really suppose you wrote it?"

"Think of it? Why, I think it is good. I think it is sense. I have no doubt that every year millions and millions of bushels of turnips are spoiled in this township alone by being pulled in a half-ripe condition, when, if they had sent a boy up to shake the tree ——"

"Shake your grandmother! Turnips don't grow on trees!"

"Oh, they don't, don't they? Well, who said they did? The language was intended to be figurative, wholly figurative. Anybody that knows anything will know that I meant that the boy should shake the vine."

Then this old person got up and tore his paper all into small shreds, and stamped on them, and broke several things with his cane, and said I did not know as much as a cow; and then went out and banged the door after him, and, in short, acted in such a way that I fancied he was displeased about something. But not knowing what the trouble was, I could not be any help to him.

Pretty soon after this a long cadaverous creature, with lanky locks hanging down to his shoulders, and a week's stubble bristling from

the hills and valleys of his face, darted within the door, and halted, motionless, with finger on lip, and head and body bent in listening attitude. No sound was heard. Still he listened. No sound. Then he turned the key in the door, and came elaborately tiptoeing toward me till he was within long reaching distance of me, when he stopped and, after scanning my face with intense interest for a while, drew a folded copy of our paper from his bosom, and said:

"There, you wrote that. Read it to me—quick! Relieve me. I suffer."

I read as follows; and as the sentences fell from my lips I could see the relief come, I could see the drawn muscles relax, and the anxiety go out of the face, and rest and peace steal over the features like the merciful moonlight over a desolate landscape:

The guano is a fine bird, but great care is necessary in rearing it. It should not be imported earlier than June or later than September. In the winter it should be kept in a warm place, where it can hatch out its young.

It is evident that we are to have a backward season for grain. Therefore it will be well for the farmer to begin setting out his corn-stalks and planting his buckwheat cakes in July instead of August.

Concerning the pumpkin.—This berry is a favorite with the natives of the interior of New England, who prefer it to the gooseberry for the making of fruit-cake, and who likewise give it the preference over the raspberry for feeding cows, as being more filling and fully as satisfying. The pumpkin is the only esculent of the orange family that will thrive in the North, except the gourd and one or two varieties of the squash. But the custom of planting it in the front yard with the shrubbery is fast going out of vogue, for it is now generally conceded that the pumpkin as a shade tree is a failure.

Now, as the warm weather approaches, and the ganders begin to spawn ——

The excited listener sprang toward me to shake hands, and said:

"There, there—that will do. I know I am all right now, because you have read it just as I did, word for word. But, stranger, when I first read it this morning, I said to myself, I never, never believed it before, notwithstanding my friends kept me under watch so strict, but now I believe I am crazy; and with that I fetched a howl that you might have heard two miles, and started out to kill somebody—because, you know, I knew it would come to that sooner or later, and so I might as well begin. I read one of them paragraphs over again, so as to be certain, and then I burned my house down and

started. I have crippled several people, and have got one fellow up a tree, where I can get him if I want him. But I thought I would call in here as I passed along and make the thing perfectly certain; and now it is certain, and I tell you it is lucky for the chap that is in the tree. I should have killed him sure, as I went back. Good-bye, sir, good-bye; you have taken a great load off my mind. My reason has stood the strain of one of your agricultural articles, and I know that nothing can ever unseat it now. Good-bye, sir."

I felt a little uncomfortable about the cripplings and arsons this person had been entertaining himself with, for I could not help feeling remotely accessory to them. But these thoughts were quickly banished, for the regular editor walked in! (I thought to myself, Now if you had gone to Egypt as I recommended you to, I might have had a chance to get my hand in; but you wouldn't do it, and here you are. I sort of expected you.)

The editor was looking sad and perplexed and dejected.

He surveyed the wreck which that old rioter and these two young farmers had made, and then said, "This is a sad business—a very sad business. There is the mucilage bottle broken, and six panes of glass, and a spittoon, and two candlesticks. But that is not the worst. The reputation of the paper is injured—and permanently, I fear. True, there never was such a call for the paper before, and it never sold such a large edition or soared to such celebrity;—but does one want to be famous for lunacy, and prosper upon the infirmities of his mind? My friend, as I am an honest man, the street out here is full of people, and others are roosting on the fences, waiting to get a glimpse of you, because they think you are crazy. And well they might after reading your editorials. They are a disgrace to journalism. Why, what put it into your head that you could edit a paper of this nature? You do not seem to know the first rudiments of agriculture. You speak of a furrow and a harrow as being the same thing; you talk of the moulting season for cows; and you recommend the domestication of the pole-cat on account of its playfulness and its excellence as a ratter! Your remark that clams will lie quiet if music be played to them was superfluous—entirely superfluous. Nothing disturbs clams. Clams always lie quiet. Clams care nothing whatever about music. Ah, heavens and earth, friend! if you had made the acquiring of ignorance the study of your life, you could not have

graduated with higher honor than you could today. I never saw anything like it. Your observation that the horse-chestnut as an article of commerce is steadily gaining in favor, is simply calculated to destroy this journal. I want you to throw up your situation and go. I want no more holiday—I could not enjoy it if I had it. Certainly not with you in my chair. I would always stand in dread of what you might be going to recommend next. It makes me lose all patience every time I think of your discussing oyster-beds under the head of 'Landscape Gardening.' I want you to go. Nothing on earth could persuade me to take another holiday. Oh! why didn't you tell me you didn't know anything about agriculture?"

"Tell you, you cornstalk, you cabbage, you son of a cauliflower? It's the first time I ever heard such an unfeeling remark. I tell you I have been in the editorial business going on fourteen years, and it is the first time I ever heard of a man's having to know anything in order to edit a newspaper. You turnip! Who write the dramatic critiques for the second-rate papers? Why, a parcel of promoted shoemakers and apprentice apothecaries, who know just as much about good acting as I do about good farming and no more. Who review the books? People who never wrote one. Who do up the heavy leaders on finance? Parties who have had the largest opportunities for knowing nothing about it. Who criticise the Indian campaigns? Gentlemen who do not know a war-whoop from a wigwam, and who never have had to run a foot race with a tomahawk, or pluck arrows out of the several members of their families to build the evening campfire with. Who write the temperance appeals, and clamor about the flowing bowl? Folks who will never draw another sober breath till they do it in the grave. Who edit the agricultural papers, you—yam? Men, as a general thing, who fail in the poetry line, yellow-colored novel line, sensation-drama line, city-editor line, and finally fall back on agriculture as a temporary reprieve from the poorhouse. You try to tell me anything about the newspaper business! Sir, I have been through it from Alpha to Omaha, and I tell you that the less a man knows the bigger the noise he makes and the higher the salary he commands. Heaven knows if I had but been ignorant instead of cultivated, and impudent instead of diffident, I could have made a name for myself in this cold selfish world. I take my leave, sir. Since I have been treated as you have treated me, I am perfectly

willing to go. But I have done my duty. I have fulfilled my contract as far as I was permitted to do it. I said I could make your paper of interest to all classes—and I have. I said I could run your circulation up to twenty thousand copies, and if I had had two more weeks I'd have done it. And I'd have given you the best class of readers that ever an agricultural paper had—not a farmer in it, nor a solitary individual who could tell a watermelon tree from a peach-vine to save his life. You are the loser by this rupture, not me, Pie-plant. Adios."

I then left.

THE MAN WHO STOLE THE PELICAN [1]

I. A. Williams

Sir Charles Trumpington, permanent Chief of His Majesty's Diplomatic Office, was in a quandary. He knew very well that the foolscap envelope, which lay unopened on his desk, contained his emissary's secret report on the recent murders at Tresbon, the capital of Zenobia. He recognized the writing of the address, and, moreover, the report was expected. But, on the other hand, he had not expected this report—a document the secrecy of which was of international importance—to reach him for at least another two days. On Wednesday, at the earliest, he had thought that it might arrive; and now there it was staring him in the face, at ten o'clock on Monday morning. It was most annoying.

"Confound Travers!" thought Sir Charles, "I wish he were sometimes not quite so speedy in carrying out his instructions!"

For the fact was, much as Trumpington wished for this report, he was expecting a visit, in half an hour's time, from the Zenobian Ambassador: and he particularly wished to be able to assure His Excellency that no reliable account of the Tresbon murders had yet reached London. That would enable him to give the Ambassador

[1] From *The London Mercury*, by permission of Longmans, Green and Company.

a chance of explaining the affair, and would also allow Trumpington to estimate how honestly Zenobia intended to act by Great Britain in this troublesome affair. It would, of course, be quite possible to read the report, and still assert to his visitor that he had not done so. But Trumpington had the peculiar cast of mind that dislikes the lie direct—even in a good cause—and he therefore sought for some less blatantly untruthful way out of his difficulty. He would put the document, still unopened and unread, in his safe. That would do, at a pinch, though he would not feel particularly comfortable about it. Supposing the Ambassador were to word his questions awkwardly, and ask, for instance: "Do you mean to assure me, Sir Charles, that you have no report on these regrettable incidents"—he would hardly use the word murders—"in your files?" To answer such a question would certainly entail some violence to Sir Charles Trumpington's conscience—a part of his being which he treated—perhaps in reaction against the general standards of diplomacy—with a tenderness which amounted almost to cosseting.

No, he reflected, that would hardly do. The lie direct he would avoid, if he possibly could. It would be better to get the wretched report clear out of the building; and then, unless the Ambassador were so unfortunate in his choice of phrases as to use the verb receive—"Have you not received an account?"—he might get out of the affair without a stain upon his character. The reader will perhaps think that a diplomatist's conscience was hardly worth so much thought, such long consideration; but this was not the view of Sir Charles Trumpington. He finally decided to have the inopportune document removed, temporarily, from the Diplomatic Office, and he therefore rang the bell.

"Ask Mr. Tape to step this way," he said to the commissionaire who answered his ring.

Two minutes later Mr. Michael Tape made his appearance. "Ah, Tape," said the chief, affably, but yet with a touch of nervousness in his manner, "nothing of any special importance in this morning, I suppose?"

"Nothing particular, sir."

"Well—er—well—the fact is, Tape, it would be a considerable convenience to me if you would condescend to take the morning off to-day."

Tape looked surprised. "Take the morning off, sir," he repeated incredulously.

"Yes, quite so," replied Sir Charles. "Go out for a walk. It's a nice sunny morning. Go anywhere you like. And, by the way, you might slip this letter in your pocket before you go—but mind you take the greatest possible care of it—the very greatest care. Guard it as you would your honour. Your life, I mean," he corrected, thinking, no doubt, that the latter was a more intrinsically valuable commodity.

Tape took the envelope. Travers's writing, he knew; and he also knew of the Tresbon murders, the Zenobian Ambassador's impending call, and the line his chief intended to take at the interview. He had, in addition, a fairly accurate appreciation of Sir Charles Trumpington's mental habits. So he was able to grasp the situation.

"I understand, sir," he said, slipping the precious envelope into the inside breast pocket of his jacket.

Sir Charles looked somewhat pained at his subordinate's remark.

"I don't know, Mr. Tape," he said stiffly, "that there is any need for you to understand. That will do for the present. Go out immediately, and be back with Travers's rep—er, I mean, with the envelope, at two o'clock."

Michael Tape retired, fetched his hat and stick from his own room, and left the building. He strolled along Whitehall a short way, then turned through the Horse Guards Arch and sauntered idly into St. James's Park. He was a man of about forty years of age, inclining to stoutness, and of somewhat fastidious tastes. His hair was well-brushed and black in colour—though the latter fact did not prevent certain of his more jocose friends from seizing the obvious opportunity afforded by his surname, and by his employment in the Civil Service, to the extent of calling him "Red Tape" in playful moments. This annoyed Michael, though he tried not to show it.

Perhaps because a career in the Diplomatic Office left him little faith in human nature, Michael Tape's passion in life was the study of birds and beasts of all sorts. Every Sunday afternoon, for example, he would wander round the Zoo, and he was known to all the keepers there as one of the more instructed of the regular visitors of the Gardens. Most of his meditations centred round animals of

various sorts, and sometimes he would imagine himself going on romantic expeditions to distant parts of the world and returning with strange and rare beasts and birds for the collection in Regent's Park. It was one of his daydreams to see the magic phrase "Presented by Michael Tape, Esq., F.Z.S." painted upon innumerable little tin labels. This morning, however, he did not go to the Zoo, but into St. James's Park, to visit his old friends the pelicans.

He was, apparently, in luck, for half a dozen of those admirably grotesque birds had left the water of the lake and were sunning themselves on the grass close to the railings, against which Tape leaned idly, watching the pompous movements of the pelicans. One of them had carried a small fish along from the water, but had dropped it on the turf without swallowing it, for pelicans, as anyone who has watched them knows, are fond of toying with their food—tossing it up in the air and catching it, then dropping it again—before finally making a meal of it. Tape thought it would be amusing to get hold of the fish and to hold it up by the tail for one of the birds to catch. He therefore bent over the rails and tried to draw the fish near to him with his stick. This manœuvre attracted the attention of the pelicans, who came poking round his stick, making clacking noises with their long bills.

Then, while this entertaining sport was at its height, a horrible thing happened. The precious envelope, with Travers's secret report inside it, slipped out of Tape's pocket and fell right in front of the assembled pelicans.

This, in itself, would not have been a terribly serious matter, had not one of the birds taken into its head the perverse idea that the wretched envelope might make a pleasant change from a diet of fish. With this in mind, and before Tape could rescue his precious charge, the pelican in question had seized the envelope, had tossed it up in the air, had caught it adroitly, and was holding it in his bill. Tape was horrified.

"Give it here," he shouted to the bird. But shouting did no good, the bird merely once more threw the thing up and caught it.

Tape tried persuasion. "Pretty Pelly," he coaxed, working upon an obvious analogy, "there's a good Pelly. There's a nice bird." And he held out his hand, hoping, supposedly, that the pelican would hand the document back to him.

But no miracle of the kind happened; persuasion was as useless as shouting; and the pelican, deciding to taste this strange titbit, incontinently bolted the envelope. Into the pouch it went, then it could be seen travelling down the throat, and finally it disappeared into the innermost portions of the bird's anatomy.

This was a disaster indeed. Tape could see his whole career disappearing in the crop of the pelican, which, together with its companions, was now waddling towards the lake. What was to be done? No park-keeper was in sight to whom Tape could appeal for aid; and he knew that if he once took his eye off the identical bird that contained Travers's report (he had heard of documents being digested, but never before in quite this way) he would not recognize it from its fellows, and the whole flock might have to be slaughtered in order to recover the lost document. At this thought he quailed; to have his six beloved pelicans butchered was more than he could have stood, even had he thought that he could have persuaded the park authorities to do it. He must come to a decision, at once; and this necessity being forced upon him, he did so. He vaulted, with surprising agility, over the railings, rushed towards the pelican and, remembering his early achievements as a Rugby football player, threw himself full length after it, clasping it round the neck and shoulders.

But the pelican was not for surrendering without a struggle, and for a minute or so bird and civil servant rolled about this way and that on the grass, the former emitting loud squawks and the latter puffing and snorting like a thousand grampuses. But eventually Tape had the better of it, and managed to get on his feet, still clasping the struggling bird to his breast.

A pelican, it will readily be understood, is no mean weight, but Tape succeeded in clambering back across the railings without losing his prisoner. Luckily the park was almost deserted, but one male loafer and a couple of nursemaids had now appeared on the scene, and in the far, far distance our hero could see a policeman making as hurried an approach as dignity would permit. Tape realized, therefore, that in a few moments authority would arrive, and would certainly prevent his kidnapping project. But it was only a few yards to the road, along which he could see a disengaged taxi driving slowly in his direction. To the taxi, then, he bolted, the terrified bird

fighting all the while to get free of his clutches, and making all the noises its capacious throat could command.

Michael Tape, however, was made of stern stuff, and kept a firm grasp of his lively burden. Gasping for breath he tottered to the taxi (which the driver had pulled up in astonishment) and pushed the bird, beak foremost, in through the fortunately open window.

The driver began to protest, but Tape cut him short with the magic phrase "Three times your fare!" and then tried to get into the car himself. But the pelican, apparently, was of another opinion, and every time the luckless Michael put his foot inside the door he found his leg painfully assaulted with all the violence of which that very powerful beak was capable. Yet the policeman (who had accelerated his pace) was now within thirty yards, things were almost desperate, and into the cab Michael plunged, to the further severe detriment of his calves.

"Where to, sir?" cried the driver.

"Anywhere you like!" yelled Tape, and off the taxi started, beating the policeman by a bare five yards.

The drive was such as neither Michael nor the driver (nor even possibly the bird) was ever afterwards likely to forget. First of all the gallant diplomat had his feathered companion to reckon with, and the latter was in an excessively obstreperous mood. It flapped at Tape's face with its wings; it prodded him violently in the stomach; and all the time it gave vent to blood-curdling noises which made the taxi-driver shudder, attracted the attention of all passers-by, and caused every policeman on the route to draw out his pocket-book and make a note of the number of the car. At last, however, the confounded bird appeared to tire, and had a quiet spell which gave its captor a chance to collect his thoughts.

This, of course, brought him face to face with his second problem —where was he to take the pelican, and how was he to extract from it the precious report? Michael Tape thought and thought, and at last he came to the conclusion that the unfortunate bird would have to be killed and cut open. But who should do it? He firmly refused to face the possibility that he himself should kill the bird. It seemed rather a poulterer's job. Then he reflected again that perhaps pelicans were not poultry and that he ought to apply to a veterinary surgeon for assistance. But he knew no vet., he considered, and then the

solution struck him. The greater must comprise the less! What a veterinary could do a doctor must certainly also be able to perform—and he had, among his personal friends, a distinguished surgeon who would surely come to his rescue.

"Drive to 65 Harley Street," he shouted through the speaking-tube, and the driver, relieved at being given so respectable an address, nodded assent.

Five minutes more brought him to 65 Harley Street, the house of George Redman, one of the most eminent of the younger surgeons and an old friend of Tape's. Getting out of the taxi, and slamming the door quickly before the pelican could follow him, he was about to ring the bell when the front door of the house opened and out walked a pompous gentleman whom he recognized as his Grace the Duke of Dumpshire, with whom he occasionally played bridge at his club. The Duke stared hard at Tape's muddied and dishevelled appearance, but he nodded affably enough and was about to speak to him when he suddenly noticed the pelican looking out of the taxi window.

"Heavens!" exclaimed the Duke, and he stumped off down the street, obviously under the impression that the young diplomatist (diplomatists are still young at forty) had taken leave of his senses.

Fortunately Redman was disengaged, and Tape was soon in his consulting-room, pouring out his woes to him.

"But," said the surgeon, "where do I come in?"

"Well, you see," replied Tape, "I thought you might cut the bird open for me, and recover Travers's report."

"The devil you did!" exclaimed Redman. "My dear chap, I can't operate on a pelican."

"Why not? You're a surgeon, aren't you?"

"Of course I am."

"Well, then," said Tape, "there you are! If you can cut open human beings, surely you can manage a mere bird. Why, I don't make such an awful mess, myself, of carving a chicken!"

"Anyhow," answered Redman decisively, "I'm not going to."

Tape, however, was not to be put off even with so definite a refusal. "My dear Redman," he continued, "think of the service you will be rendering to the country! Travers's report is of immense value. It may make the difference between peace and war. And then

think of the good turn you will be doing to me, one of your oldest pals! For if I lose that report, it means the sack for me from the Diplomatic Office."

"And you jolly well deserve it!" was Redman's reply. Then he went on, more favourably: "But I suppose that I shall have to try to get you out of your scrape. Yet I don't fancy that it will be necessary to cut open the wretched pelican—for whom, honestly, I feel more sorry than I do for you, old chap!"

"But what else will recover the report?"

"Why, you juggings," said Redman, "have you never heard of an emetic?"

"Lord! What an idea!" shouted Tape, and before Redman could say another word he had dashed out, paid off the taxi (at the promised treble rate), and was staggering back into the house grasping once more in his arms the fluttering, squawking pelican.

"Hi! Stop! Not in here, you fool!" yelled the surgeon—but too late. The pelican was already in the consulting-room, where it proceeded to flutter madly round, upsetting the telephone, the inkpot, a couple of vases of flowers, and other trifles.

On the scene that followed a veil must be drawn. The reader, if he has any imagination, can reconstruct it for himself, if he chooses (which he may not). It is sufficient to say that in three-quarters of an hour that priceless envelope was recovered, but looking much the worse for its experience, and smelling amazingly of partly digested fish. The pelican, also, was hardly looking in its best form, and the state of the consulting room was not a credit to Harley Street.

"My dear Redman," cried Tape exultingly, when it was all over, "you can't imagine how grateful I am to you. You have saved my reputation and my position. You have quite possibly also saved England from a war. Thank you a million times, my dear fellow. Now I must get back to the Diplomatic Office. Trumpington will be expecting me."

He made for the door, but Redman grabbed him by the arm.

"Stop a minute," said the surgeon, "what about your feathered friend here?"

Tape looked puzzled.

"Perhaps," he hesitated, "you wouldn't mind my leaving him here for a bit? I would . . ."

"No you don't, my boy," Redman assured him. "When you leave here that bird does too."

"But I can't take a pelican to the Diplomatic Office!"

"That's your trouble, not mine. After all, you stole the pelican!"

Then it was that Michael Tape's dream came to him again. He saw his chance of rounding off the adventure in a manner at once dashing and whimsical. At last there would be one of those little labels, with "Presented by Michael Tape, Esq., F.Z.S." upon it, in Regent's Park. He would present the pelican to the Zoo!

This was, of course, sheer madness—a direct result, he afterwards believed, of Satanic temptation, and it led him into still more trouble. But for the moment his soul was serene and joyful. His eyes glistened.

"All right," he said, with assumed carelessness. "I'll take the beastly bird and get rid of it somehow."

Once more the poor pelican, now scarcely resisting at all, for it felt uncommonly limp after the doctoring its insides had been given, was hustled into a taxi along with Michael Tape. Soon they reached the Zoological Society's offices, and Michael alighted and entered the building.

"I was wondering," he said to the clerk, "whether the Society would like to accept a pelican—a fine specimen—as a gift from me!"

"I should imagine, sir," replied the clerk, "that the Society would be most grateful. Perhaps you would care to write to the Secretary about it?"

"I should rather see him now," answered Tape, "for, as a matter of fact, I've got it outside in a taxi."

The clerk looked at him queerly, for he had just seen an evening paper which gave a highly colored account of the theft that morning of one of the pelicans in St. James's Park. He noticed also that Tape's clothes were muddy and he looked as if he had been struggling with something.

"Very good, sir," said the clerk, "I will see if I can find the Secretary. Perhaps you wouldn't mind stepping into the waiting-room for a few minutes, sir?"

The unsuspecting Tape—who had forgotten all about evening papers—did as he was bid, and no sooner was he safely in, than the astute clerk telephoned to the police.

Unfortunate Tape! In but a few minutes there arrived two stalwart constables who, when he tried to explain who he was, merely warned him that anything he said might be used in evidence against him, and, when he protested the excellence of his motives, answered: "All right, Mr. Pelican-Pincher, you can tell them that at the station!" So to the police station he was forced to go, and only with the greatest difficulty was he able to persuade the inspector to allow him to telephone to Sir Charles Trumpington. Having done that he felt a trifle easier in mind, for his chief had promised to come round at once to see what could be done. But Tape had to wait Sir Charles's arrival in the cells, which he felt was no highly dignified position for a rising light of the Diplomatic Office. He consoled himself, however, with the thought that he had at least got rid of the pelican, and that he had Travers's report safe in his pocket.

Sir Charles Trumpington was as good as his word, and before long had bailed out our hero and had heard his story.

"I must say, Tape," he said, as they drove towards Whitehall together, "that after your first inexcusable carelessness in allowing that ridiculous bird to get hold of Travers's letter, you showed commendable perseverance in retrieving your blunder."

Tape murmured some acknowledgment of the compliment.

"You may be amused to learn," continued Sir Charles, "that this somewhat soiled and fishy envelope which I hold in my hand—really I hope you will not lose any more documents inside pelicans—does *not* contain Travers's report."

"Doesn't contain Travers's report!" cried Tape. "What do you mean, Sir?"

"That my original calculation was correct. The report will only arrive on Wednesday, for I have just had a cable from Travers that he has posted it from Brindisi to-day. This," he continued, opening the famous envelope, "contains, let me see—only a few Zenobian postage stamps for my grand-daughter, Margaret. Travers is always so thoughtful. He loves to do little kindnesses of this sort when his duties take him abroad."

Then it was that Michael Tape broke into a commentary upon recent events couched in language that was not only undiplomatic, but positively unparliamentary. Sir Charles, however, took no notice, for he was, after all, not totally devoid of human sympathy.

SHOES [1]

Frances Gilchrist Wood

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

[In tropical regions when a white man of Northern breed leaves off his shoes and goes barefoot like the natives, it is both an outward and inward sign of giving up to native sloth and indifference. To use the familiar expression, he has "gone native"; his final claim to respectability is cast aside. This is the story of the disheartening struggle of two young Americans to maintain their white-man's standard in the tropics. Veterans of the World War, jobless, friendless, they had wandered down into the tropical region of Honduras, Central America. After a year there, battered and discouraged, weakened physically and morally, they saw they were on the verge of giving up to the life of the native, of becoming "T. T. T.'s," Typical, Tropical Tramps. Tom, the older and stronger of the two, has seen Pete languishing under the caressing influence of Lola, a pretty native girl. But worse than that, the younger boy has suggested that they cast aside their remnants of shoes and go barefoot. Tom, summoning up all his remaining firmness, and with the aid of the still potent, "Company! Atten-tion!" has swung the boy about, repaired his tattered shoes with fiber, turned Lola aside, and got the two of them started for the coast of the Caribbean Sea. With their *machetes* the two men slashed their way, right, left, right, left, through the jungle, Tom still determined, Pete sulky, and more and more irritated by the pain from his exposed sore feet.]

RIGHT, left, slash, slash; with blinding abruptness the trail ran out into a sundrenched savannah. Beyond it the faint path followed a narrow saddle crest between bottomless barrancas, and through a gap in the trees glittered and sparkled a rippling sea.

"Gee, that looks pretty! Is it the Gulf?"

[1] Reprinted from *Harper's Magazine* with the permission of the author.

"Must be. Carrillo's the Port. Can't be many miles away."

They brushed through tall savannah grass and walked between curious mounds set in a hollow square.

"Queer-looking place. Set round like a plaza, Tom."

Tom surveyed the treeless plain. "Maybe it is. Remember what that explorer guy told us about up in Yucatan? Maybe this is a Maya ruin too. They were big people a thousand years ago."

"What happened to 'em? Did he say?"

Tom shook his head. "Said they weren't fighters. Maybe an earthquake wiped them out. Maybe a plague like"—he stooped to tighten a string, "like hookworm. None of 'em wore shoes."

It was easier going now, although the sun was hot and the hills precipitous, if it hadn't been for juggling elusive soles sliding everywhere on the down grade except under one's foot in the moment of need. Nearer the sea, they came upon outlying huts in long orderly rows, flanked with breadfruit trees and mangoes, cocoanuts and cotton plants; streets swept as clean as the dirt floors that bordered them.

Tom grinned at the dark-skinned naked children scurrying through the palm grove and diving into the surf. "It's a Carib village, all right. Spanish town must be the other side."

Within one of the huts a group of women was chattering, grating manioc roots, and baking the cassava. Pete rested his elbows on a window sill, smiled at the younger women and jollied the elderly one presiding over brazier and the hardening cake. He succeeded as usual, and divided his loot of one thin wafer with Tom as they walked up the hill.

Pink and blue plaster marked the beginning of Spanish town. Instinctively the two wanderers drifted toward the market, almost deserted at this time of day. A ranchero reined across the square and Tom stepped toward him. In the vernacular he asked about the Port, and the man pointed across the bay to long low buildings flanking the fruit dock of an American company.

"How far?"

"Viente y cinco."

The boy groaned. "Twenty-five miles more, Pete!" Again he addressed the ranchero, asking for work, a place to stay. With hostile contempt the man looked down at their rags, laughed in their faces, and spurred past.

"Darn him!" Pete whirled angrily on his comrade. "Don't ask 'em for anything! There's other ways ——"

"Yes—beg! Wheedle it out of the women! There's nothing can sink so low"—the thin face was gray with misery and shame, "as a white beggar in a black country! Come on!"

Pete scowled; then whispered under his breath, "I didn't have to wheedle—Lola!"

The street against the hill struggled down into a dirty ill-smelling warren of close-packed houses, *tiendas* of all sorts and swarms of children of every shade. A rustle of low muttering followed the Americans.

"Pretty filthy, Tom. The jungle's cleaner than this."

The other man grunted and turned into a cross street that led to the sea.

"Here's the railroad track, Tom. Are we going to hoof it those twenty-five miles to the Port to-night?"

"We've got no money—no place to stay here!"

Pete glared across at the Port. "They're white men. If ——" the boy choked over the words, "Damn it—if they look at us like these niggers and halfbreeds do, I'll break their necks!"

Aimlessly they turned from the tracks and wandered up the hill by the sea. On their right climbed a high stone wall; half way up an ugly stone pile thrust itself above the screen and scowled at the world outside. Impatiently a chain clanked behind the barricade and sulphurous Spanish scorched the air.

"The hoosegow, eh?"

Tom nodded. "We'll have to watch our step. Their best quarry is always a gringo."

A pierced and ruined wall angled across the crest of the hill, its empty arches opening on sea and sky. Tom drew back, put out his hand with a quick word.

"Pete, don't you remember? This is Carrillo and that's the wall where Walker, the American filibuster, faced a firing squad. Don't you remember how he ——"

Abruptly they had rounded the end of the ruin and faced an open plaza, flanked by the usual cathedral, prison, *cabildo*, and municipal guard quarters. Beyond the parade ground lay the open sea.

A bugle blew uncertainly. A loafing group straggled forward and strung out across the square, vivid in blue uniforms with ornate red facings, puttees of the stiffest, and below them, bare brown feet.

Unevenly they dragged through a casual drill. No two gun butts struck the stones at the same moment. No two gun barrels gleamed in the setting sun at the same angle. Bare feet shuffled irrespective of line, with or without orders.

The two Americans stood watching with the crowd gathered on the crest of the hill. Unconsciously and fervently Pete swore in an endless undertone of indignant protest at this travesty of an army, and Tommy grunted an accompaniment. As the squad padded across the parade ground toward the barracks in a final evolution, their countrymen withdrew admiring eyes and turned to scowl at the strangers.

A fat Honduranian looked them up and down and spat the word "Gringo!" with indescribable contempt. His neighbor laughed at their rags and added a scornful "T.T.T.!"

Pete's ready fist doubled as his face went scarlet, and he took one step toward assault and battery and certain arrest. At the next, he whirled sharply to the right at a command that rang like a bugle call. "Company! Atten-*tion*!"

Stiffly the two Americans clicked the heels of ragged shoes together and faced the lounging Hondurian Guard. With the spring of steel they snapped through the manual of arms with two nicked and battered *machetes*.

"Present—*arms*! Right—shoulder—*arms*! Left—shoulder—*arms*! . . . Parade—*rest*!"

The worn blades glittered in two parallel bars at every evolution; turn, wheel, right, left. The two as one loaded, fired; erect, kneeling, prone, through to a clocklike, perfect end.

"About—*face*! Forward—*march*!"

Tommy snapped out the last command as they turned their flat backs upon the populace of Spanish Honduras and marched stiffly across the plaza. A uniform of dirty dungarees, their arms an absurd *machete*, but the feet above the wabbling soles clicked in snappy precision over the cobblestones of Carrillo.

The fat citizen closed his mouth with a gasp of appreciation, lifted his hands involuntarily, and led the crowd in an applause that followed Company C of the A.E.F. round the corner of the ruined wall.

Left, right; left, right; they passed stockade and hoosegow, on down the hill to the railway track. Without a word they marched between the ribbons of rails that curved out of sight around the first lagoon. Under compulsion they shortened step from tie to tie across the bridging trestles, but the cadence of the march never broke. They passed the switches of the turntable Y and faced the miles along the shore just back of a cocoanut grove, the first long stretch toward the Port.

Left, right; left, right! With a hysterical chuckle Pete began to laugh as the impulse of emotion died down; but Tommy's stern face cut like a cameo through the fading light.

"We can't make it to the Port to-night, Tom."

"We're going to!"

"To take ship?"

"Yes—back to a country where soldiers *drill*—and wear shoes!"

Pete grinned. "It was fun to show 'em how, and hear 'em cheer." Again he chuckled, stumbled, his right foot crumpled under him and the boy was down on the road-bed, swearing in a resourceful combination of languages and patois.

"Darned thing flopped when I was half way through the drill; been crippling me ever since!" He gathered together the dismembered footgear and stared behind him along the darkening track. "See that fiber anywhere? It's lost off."

Slowly he limped back along the ties; Tom followed, searching through ragged pockets anxiously. Pete's hands explored his tattered coat, drew out a leaf-wrapped bundle and stared at it fixedly.

"Lola's—tortillas! She's the only one—who cares!" The boy's face set grimly as he stood, ragged, hungry, penniless, discredited before the world. Again he plodded back toward the jungle, picked up a shred of fiber and twisted it about his ankle. He faced the Port, lips unsteady, eyes down, as they tramped past a signal box by the switch. Again the unlucky shoe caught in a metal frog and tore loose, raking into the flesh beneath.

With a blazing oath Pete kicked off the dangling patches, stooped and jerked apart the fibers of the other shoe and stood up, defiant.

"I'm going—barefoot!"

"You can't, Pete! They're white in the Port! Here—let me tie 'em on!"

Peter Eldon swayed in the weird half-light. "I'm going barefoot—back to the bush—and Lola!"

Tom caught him by the shoulder. "No you're not! Come on—I'll help! I'll—I'll go to the—maybe there's a consul there!"

"A consul? *Our* consul?" The boy roared with bitter laughter. "You must think you're an Englishman! Say ——" He bent forward in the dim light, staring into his comrade's eyes, "Remember the last time we wanted to buck up and asked an American consul ——"

His laughter choked on a sob as he twisted against Tom's grip. For a moment they struggled before Pete jerked himself free, stooped for the tattered shoes, and ran through the palms toward the rippling water.

Tom ran after him silently, swiftly, but the barefooted racer outdistanced him, reached the shore of the gulf, lifted his arm, and sent the shoes hurtling. They disappeared in a splash, far out.

Tom checked him with a cry. "Peter Eldon—you ——"

But Pete had turned and was running swiftly along the sandy beach back toward the jungle.

"Pete—Buddy—wait! I'll go barefoot—to the Port! We can—earn 'em! Wait ——"

He tore along the beach, but the barefooted runner had disappeared in the quick shadows of a tropical twilight.

"Buddy—Bud ——" The thin-faced, ragged boy leaned against the rough bark of a palm trunk and buried his face in his arms. Hurriedly a last red arc of sun slipped behind the waters of the gulf and it was night. Long-leaf palm daggers rasped and slatted against one another in the trade winds.

Ragged shoulders steadied only to be shaken again. With final effort they stiffened and the man walked toward the track. He stood between the rails, staring back into the jungle dark.

"I can't find him—now! It's got him!" The thin shoulders drooped, "If I should—go back ——" He caught his lip between his teeth until the blood came, "I can't—I've got to—go on!"

Grimly he turned toward a distant hostile Port and plodded through the dark. Jerkily the sobs tore from his throat, "Just—for a—pair—of shoes! Oh—damn—shoes!"

Blindly a dim figure marched between the rails, left, right; left,

right; steadily ahead toward the ship's wharf in ragged chafing uppers and flapping soles.

A STUDY IN NERVES

Anonymous

A SMALL door at the right of the pulpit opened, and he walked to his place before the altar. It had already been indicated by an inconspicuous chalk mark on the floor. His best man followed a little behind him at an interval which had required frequent rehearsing the evening before. He did not catch his chalk mark for an instant, and overstepped it, but he retreated cautiously, still facing the enemy, and carefully covered it with his foot.

People had been pouring into the church for the last half hour. At last all those who had been invited had been given the front seats. There was a slight flutter in the audience when the bride's mother and her two married sisters were escorted to their seats on the opposite side of the aisle from that set apart for the bridegroom's family, in the suggestively antagonistic manner which is customary when two houses are about to be united.

From his chalk mark by the altar he gazed rather unintelligently at the blur of faces turned towards him. Why should they all be staring at him? Was his cravat slipping up over his collar? Only a hoarse but reassuring "You're all right, old man!" brought his wandering hand back to his side again. But why didn't the music begin?

The vast aggregated stare of the throng in front of him gradually resolved itself into its elements. It struck him that every one seemed remarkably solemn, as if it were an occasion for sadness rather than for smiles. Why couldn't they look pleasant about it? Then it occurred to him that he felt solemn himself, and the cheerful and sympathetic grin on the face of one of his still-bachelor classmates,

whom he had suddenly discovered, seemed decidedly out of place and frivolous.

But none the less, something seemed required of him. Should he grin back, or should he merely wink in acknowledgment? The rehearsal had not prepared him for this emergency. He shirked the responsibility of deciding, and looked away.

Why didn't the music begin? Why didn't they open those doors? Had anything gone wrong? Had any one arrived at the last moment to announce some good cause why they two should not be joined together in holy wedlock? No, thank heaven, he could face the world on that score. None the less, he felt that it must be fearfully late. Yet he had been told that everything was all ready, and that it was time for him to take his place on his chalk mark. What were they waiting for? Had he not waited long enough already?

Why didn't the music begin? If he could only look at his watch and see what time it really was, it would relieve his mind. He remembered that he had never seen it done, and kept his hands fast at the seams of his trousers, out of temptation.

Suddenly the doors were pushed back and the bridal party appeared in the opening. Behind the double file of somber-hued ushers his eye caught a bit of color from the dress of one of the bridesmaids, and then rested for a moment upon a little cloud of pure swanlike white. Thank heaven, there she was. And as she was there, why didn't the music begin? The tallest usher changed his position, and the little white cloud disappeared behind his broad black shoulder. Confound him, why couldn't he stand still, when that was the first glimpse he had had of her for goodness only knew how long!

There they all stood in the doorway, his seven best friends and the girl's usher. He supposed there was no reason now, from his point of view, why that unfortunate should not be one of his friends, too. He felt that he had never appreciated the fellow's good qualities so strongly as at that moment. He remembered that when she had at first spoken to him of her usher he had suggested to her the inadvisability of inviting a man to be present at his own funeral, and how she had insisted that her usher she would have. There he was, so why didn't the music begin?

He saw the black back of the organist suddenly fill out as with the responsibility of his exalted position, and the next instant the

familiar "tum-tum-ti-tum" pealed through the church. He felt that his troubles were over, for anything was better than that silent staring.

For a moment he could not make out what had all at once changed the appearance of things so much. Then he discovered that the sea of faces had turned into an equally bewildering exhibition of back hair. What was the matter with his mind, anyway? Why couldn't he stop thinking?

"Tum-tum-ti-tum." The music not only had begun, but it seemed to him as if it had always been playing. Why did they not start? What was the use of all that rehearsing if they didn't know what to do when the time came? "Tum-tum-ti-tum," played the organist.

It seemed an easy matter for eight grown men to walk up a broad aisle together, two by two, a certain distance apart. They had done it half a dozen times the night before. It was perfectly simple. They were to be two pews apart. Or was it three pews? "Ti-tum-tum-ti-tum."

He didn't know which it was, but it was no affair of his, anyway. All he had to do was to stay on his chalk mark until it was time for him to go to that other chalk mark over there to receive her. There it was, a little rubbed out, to be sure, but seeming to him like the guiding star to the path of matrimony, and to it he had hitched his wagon. A scarcely breathed "They're off!" at his elbow, brought him back to earth again. They were coming through the door. It was two pews apart after all. He knew he had been right. He noticed that the girl's usher seemed as cheerful as could be expected of him. He wondered how he would feel if he had to change places with him. How had it happened that their places were not changed? He knew that he was a better fellow than the girl's usher, of course, but how had he managed to make her believe it? He knew better men than he who had been girls' ushers in their time.

"Tum-tum-ti-tum."

The two ushers in the lead were within twenty feet of him. Why didn't they move faster? It made him nervous to see them advancing upon him like that. It was like the car of Juggernaut or the inexorable march of time. They were bringing him the happiness of his whole life. Why didn't they bring it to him faster? There they were, coming at him in the same relentless way. All of them were the pendulum, swinging nearer and nearer, to push him into the pit.

"Tum-tum-ti-tum-tum."

The two ushers in the lead were so near him that he could see the pearls on the pins he had given them. There she was, Heaven bless her! What was the sense of all this bother? Why couldn't he rush down the aisle and get her, all by himself? His eye fell upon the relentless chalk mark before him, and he shifted his weight uneasily from one foot to the other.

The two files of ushers had begun to deploy on either side of him, each man trying to keep one eye on his alignment, and with the other to steer for the haven of his own particular chalk mark. As the last one disappeared from view behind him, he felt that he never wanted to see one of them again after the way they had just treated him. The next moment the bridesmaids were tripping by him, guided to their positions by that unerring instinct in regard to all that pertains to weddings, which is every woman's birthright.

Then the final "tum-tum-ti-tum" rang out triumphantly into every corner of the church. He rushed to the now benignly-inviting chalk mark, and in an instant her hand was in his own.

2. Narrative Poetry

THE CHURCH OF BROU

Matthew Arnold

In the bright October morning Savoy's duke had left his bride.
From the castle, past the drawbridge, flow'd the hunters' merry tide.
Steeds are neighing, gallants glittering, gay her smiling lord to greet,
From her mullion'd chamber-casement smiles the Duchess Marguerite.
From Vienna, by the Danube, here she came, a bride, in spring,
Now the autumn crisps the forest; hunters gather, bugles ring.
Hounds are pulling, prickers swearing, horses fret, and boar-spears glance.
Off,—they sweep the marshy forests, westward on the side of France.
Hark! the game's on foot; they scatter,—down the forest-ridings lone.
Furious, single horsemen gallop. Hark! a shout,—a crash,—a groan.
Pale and breathless came the hunters—on the turf dead lies the boar.
Ah! the duke lies stretched beside him senseless, weltering in his gore.

In the dull October evening, down the leaf-strewn forest-road,
To the castle, past the drawbridge, came the hunters with their load.
In the hall, with sconces blazing, ladies waiting round her seat,
Clothed in smiles, beneath the dais sate the Duchess Marguerite.
Hark! below the gates unbarring, tramp of men, and quick commands.
"'Tis my lord come back from hunting,"—and the duchess claps her hands.
Slow and tired came the hunters; stopp'd in darkness in the court.
"Ho! this way, ye laggard hunters. To the hall. What sport! what sport!"
Slow they entered with their master; in the hall they laid him down.
On his coat were leaves and blood-stains, on his brow an angry frown.

Dead her princely youthful husband lay before his youthful wife,
Bloody 'neath the flaring sconces: and the sight froze all her life.
In Vienna, by the Danube, kings hold revel, gallants meet.
Gay of old amid the gayest was the Duchess Marguerite.
In Vienna, by the Danube, feast and dance her youth beguiled:
Till that hour she never sorrow'd, but from then she never smiled.

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN OF THE TAPPAN ZEE [1]

Arthur Guiterman

On Tappan Zee a shroud of gray
  Is heavy, dank, and low.
And dimly gleams the beacon-ray
  Of white Pocantico.

No skipper braves old Hudson now
  Where Nyack's Headlands frown,
And safely moored is every prow
  Of drowsy Tarrytown;

Yet, clear as word of human lip,
  The river sends its shores
The rhythmic rullock-clank and drip
  Of even-rolling oars.

What rower plies a reckless oar
  With mist on flood and strand?
That Oarsman toils forevermore
  And ne'er shall reach the land.

. . . . . .

[1] Reprinted from *Ballads of Old New York*, by permission of Harper & Brothers.

Roystering, rollicking Ram van Dam,
Fond of a frolic and fond of a dram,
Fonder—yea, fonder, proclaims renown,—
Of Tryntje Bogardus of Tarrytown,
Leaves Spuyten Duyvil to roar his song!
Pull! For the current is sly and strong;
Nestles the robin and flies the bat.
Ho! for the frolic at Kakiat!

Merry, the sport at the quilting bee
Held at the farm on the Tappan Zee!
Jovial labor with quips and flings,
Dances with wonderful pigeon wings,
Twitter of maidens and clack of dames,
Honest flirtations and rousing games;
Platters of savory beef and brawn,
Buckets of treacle and good suppawn,
Oceans of cider, and beer in lakes,
Mountains of crullers and honey-cakes—
Such entertainment could never pall!
Rambout van Dam took his fill of all;
Laughed with the wittiest, worked with a zest,
Danced with the prettiest, drank with the best.
Oh! that enjoyment should breed annoy!

Tryntje grew fickle or cold or coy;
Rambout, possessed of a jealous sprite,
Scowled like the sky on a stormy night,
Snarled a good-bye from his sullen throat,
Blustered away to his tugging boat.
After him hastened Jacobus Horn:
"Stay with us, Rambout, till Monday morn.
Soon in the east will the dawn be gray,
Rest from thy oars on the Sabbath Day."

Angrily Rambout van Dam ripped back:
"Dunder en Blitzen! du Schobbejak!

Preach to thy children! and let them know
Spite of the duyvil and thee, I'll row
Thousands of Sundays, if need there be,
Home o'er this ewig-vervlekte zee!"
Muttering curses, he headed south.
Jacob, astounded, with open mouth
Watched him receding, when—crash on crash
Volleyed the thunder! A hissing flash
Smote on the river! He looked again.
Rambout was gone from the sight of men!

. . . . . .

Old Dunderberg with grumbling roar
Hath warned the fog to flee,
But still that never-wearied oar
Is heard on Tappan Zee.

A moon is closed on Hudson's breast
And lanterns gem the town;
The phantom craft that may not rest
Plies ever, up and down,

'Neath skies of blue and skies of gray,
In spite of wind or tide,
Until the trump of Judgment Day—
A sound—and naught beside.

JIM BLUDSO OF THE "PRAIRIE BELLE" [1]

John Hay

Wall, no! I can't tell whar he lives,
Because he don't live, you see;

[1] This poem is used by permission of, and by special arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers.

Leastways, he's got out of the habit
  Of livin' like you and me.
Whar have you been for the last three year
  That you haven't heard folks tell
How Jimmy Bludso passed in his checks
  The night of the *Prairie Belle?*

He were n't no saint,—them engineers
  Is all pretty much alike,—
One wife in Natchez-under-the-Hill
  And another one here, in Pike;
A keerless man in his talk was Jim,
  And an awkward hand in a row,
But he never flunked, and he never lied,—
  I reckon he never knowed how.

And this was all the religion he had,—
  To treat his engine well;
Never be passed on the river;
  To mind the pilot's bell;
And if ever the *Prairie Belle* took fire,—
  A thousand times he swore
He'd hold her nozzle agin the bank
  Till the last soul got ashore.

All boats has their day on the Mississip,
  And her day come at last,—
The *Movastar* was a better boat,
  But the *Belle* she *would n't* be passed.
And so she come tearin' along that night—
  The oldest craft on the line—
With a nigger squat on her safety-valve,
  And her furnace crammed, rosin and pine.

The fire bust out as she clared the bar,
  And burnt a hole in the night,
And quick as a flash she turned, and made
  For that willer-bank on the right.

There was runnin' and cursin', but Jim yelled out,
Over all the infernal roar,
"I'll hold her nozzle agin the bank
Till the last galoot 's ashore."

Through the hot, black breath of the burnin' boat
Jim Bludso's voice was heard,
And they all had trust in his cussedness,
And knowed he would keep his word.
And, sure 's you 're born, they all got off
Afore the smokestacks fell,—
And Bludso's ghost went up alone
In the smoke of the *Prairie Belle.*

He were n't no saint,—but at jedgment
I 'd run my chance with Jim,
'Longside of some pious gentlemen
That would n't shook hands with him.
He seen his duty, a dead-sure thing,—
And went for it thar and then;
And Christ ain't a going to be too hard
On a man that died for men.

THE REUNION OF ODYSSEUS AND PENELOPE [1]

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

Now the old woman went her way,
Laughing for joy, up to the room
Where lay her mistress, with the tidings
That her dear lord was come. Her knees
Grew strong with joy; her feeble feet

[1] From *The Odyssey of Homer*, translated by Herbert Bates, copyright, 1929, by Harper & Brothers.

Ran faster than their wont. She halted
There by her lady's head and thus
She spoke to her:
"Awake, dear child,
I come to call you, for he bade me.
Follow me now that you may both
Enjoy your happiness together
With loving hearts, for you have both
Borne many a sorrow. So, to-day,
At last, the thing you long desired
You see accomplished. He has come
Living to his own hearth, and here
Has found his son and you. And now
In his own home he has at last
Had vengeance on these wooers, on all
That wrought him evil!"
Then replied
Prudent Penelope:
"Dear nurse,
Now be not over-quick to boast
And laugh with joy. You know indeed
How welcome he would be to all
In his own house, and most to me
And to the son I bore him. Yet
This tale you tell cannot be true:
Alas, it is some god came hither
And slew those haughty wooers, angered
At the rash insults of their pride
And all their evil deeds. They honored
No man upon the earth, no man
Or good or evil who dared come
Among them here. So for their crimes
They met this end. But far away
Odysseus now has lost for ever
All hope of his returning hither—
Nay, he himself is lost!"
Then answered
Her dear nurse Eurycleia:

"Child,
What words are these that now have passed
The portal of your teeth! To say
That your own husband, he who now
Stands here upon his hearth, will never
Come home again! Your heart is ever
Slow to believe. Yet I can tell you
Another sign, a sign yet surer,
The scar of the deep wound the boar
Once gave with his bright tusk. I spied it
That day I washed his feet, and longed
To tell you what I saw. But he
Laid hand upon my mouth and so
With his wise foresight, stopped my speech.
But come, now, follow me. I venture
My life on this! If I deceive you,
Slay me, and by the worst of deaths!"
Then wise Penelope replied:
"Dear nurse, wise as you are, 'tis hard
To guard against the secret purpose
Of the eternal gods. And yet
Let us go down and seek my son
And see these wooers who lie slain
And him that slew them."
So she spoke,
And down she passed then from her room,
And sorely was her heart divided
Whether to stand far off and question
Her own dear lord, or stand beside him
And kiss his face and clasp his hand.
But when she entered and passed over
The threshold of carved stone, she went
And sat her down, facing Odysseus,
In firelight, by the farther wall.
And he still sat with downcast eyes
By the tall pillar and awaited
In wonder if his stately wife
Would speak to him when she should turn

Her eyes and see him. A long time
She sat in silence, and amazement
Was in her heart; then for a time
She gazed upon him face to face,
And then again she knew him not,
For he still wore upon his body
A beggar's raiment.
And her son,
Telemachus, now spoke, and said,
Reproaching her:
"Mother of mine,
Unmotherly, why is your heart
So hard? Why do you ever keep
Far from my father? Why not sit
Close by his side, and question him,
And ask him all his story? Nay,
There is no other woman living
Would stand aside thus, hardening
A stubborn heart against her husband
Who after many a peril past,
Comes, in the twentieth year, once more
To his own land. Your heart is ever
Harder than stone!"
Then thus replied
Prudent Penelope:
"My son,
My spirit is amazed within me.
I have no power to speak or question
Or look upon his face. And yet,
If this can be Odysseus' self,
And he has now come home, we two
May know each other far more surely
Than any other may, for we
Have secret tokens known to us,
Hidden from all besides."
So said she,
And great Odysseus smiled and quickly
Thus to Telemachus he spoke

In wing'd words:
"Go, Telemachus,
And leave your mother in the hall
To test me. She shall learn ere long
More surely what I am. But now,
Because I am unclean to see,
And wear base garments on my body,
She holds me in dishonor, saying
That I am not her lord!

. . . . . .

And thus answered
The wise Penelope:
"O man
Perplexing to my soul—nay, I
Am not held off by pride, nor scorn you,
But I am lost in wonder. Well
I know what you were once when, sailing
Away in your oared ship, you left
Your home in Ithaca. But come
Now, Eurycleia, and make ready
His firm-built bed. Make it outside
The room he built him himself. Aye, move
His firm-built bedstead forth and strew
Upon it bedding—fleeces, covers,
And bright-hued rugs."
All this she said
To try her husband. But Odysseus
Was angered at her words, and thus
He spoke to his true wife:
"What, woman!
What words are these you now have said
To pierce my heart! Who can have set
My bed in a new place? That task
Would be a hard one, aye, too hard
Even for the cleverest, unless
A god should come and easily
Remove it at his will and set it
In a new place. No mortal man

Of living men, in his full strength,
Could ever move it easily
Out of its present place. For in it,
Wrought in its very frame, is hidden
A secret token, and no other
Wrought this, but I alone.
There grew
Within our yard an olive tree,
Long-leaved and thriving, strong of growth,
Thick as a pillar. Round its trunk
I shaped my room and built it thus
Till all was finished, walling it
With massive stone, and well I fashioned
The roof to cover it and hung
And fitted its joined doors. And then,
From that long-leaved tall olive tree
I cut the crown away and squared,
Using my axe, the stem remaining
Above the roots; then with the adze
I smoothed it and made true the line,
And thus I made my bed-post. Next
I bored it all with a keen auger
And, so beginning, ever worked
On to the end, and it stood finished.
I decked it all with gold and silver
And ivory, and across it stretched
Long strips of oxhide bright and red.
This is the token that I mean.
Now, wife, I do not know if still
That bed is standing there, or whether
Some one has cut that olive stem
And moved it elsewhere."
So he spoke,
And at his words her knees grew weak
And all her soul within, for well
She knew this token that Odysseus
Had told so plainly. And she wept,
And straight to him she ran, and cast

Her arms about her husband's neck
And kissed his face and said:
"Odysseus,
Pray be not angry with me. You
Have ever been, through every fortune,
Wisest of men. The gods have sent
Sore grief upon us, for they grudged us
That we should side by side together
Share the delight of youth and cross
The threshold of old age. Yet be not,
I pray you, wroth with me or blame me,
Because I did not when I saw you,
Run thus to greet you! For my heart
Within my breast was shuddering ever
Lest some strange man should come and cheat me
With lying words. For many a man
Will plot base deeds for gain. But now,
Since you have made so plain the secret
Of this our bed, which no man living
But us has seen—save my one maid,
The serving maid my father gave me
When first I came here, who should watch
The doorway of our room—lo, now
You quite convince this heart of mine,
Stubborn what though it be!"
So spoke she,
And stronger still there came upon him
A yearning need of tears, and there,
Holding his wise and faithful wife,
He wept with joy. And she beside him,
Like men that see the land with gladness—
Seamen whose sturdy ship Poseidon
Has smitten on the deep and shattered
With storm and mighty seas, and few
Are they who from the foaming waters
Escape to swim to shore: their skin
Is crusted with the brine, but happy
They step to land once more, delivered

Out of their danger—with such gladness
She gazed upon her husband. Never
Could she release from round his neck
The clasp of her white arms. So dawn
With rosy fingers would have risen
And found them weeping, but Athene
Had shaped another plan. She stayed
The passing night and made it tarry
At its far bounds, and she delayed
Dawn too, that waited throned in gold
By Ocean's stream, nor let her yoke
Her swift-foot steeds that bring to man
The light of day.

THE GLOVE AND THE LIONS

Leigh Hunt

King Francis was a hearty king, and loved a royal sport,
And one day as his lions fought, sat looking on the court;
The nobles filled the benches, with the ladies in their pride,
And 'mongst them sat the Count de Lorge, with one for whom he sighed:
And truly 'twas a gallant thing to see that crowning show,
Valor and love, and a king above, and the royal beasts below.

Ramped and roared the lions, with horrid laughing jaws;
They bit, they glared, gave blows like beams, a wind went with their paws;
With wallowing might and stifled roar they rolled on one another,
Till all the pit with sand and mane was in a thunderous smother,
The bloody foam above the bars came whisking through the air;
Said Francis then, "Faith, gentlemen, we're better here than there!"

De Lorge's love o'erheard the King, a beauteous, lively dame,
With smiling lips and sharp bright eyes, which always seemed the same;
She thought, "The Count, my lover, is brave as brave can be.
He surely would do wondrous things to show his love of me;
King, ladies, lovers, all look on; the occasion is divine;
I'll drop my glove, to prove his love; great glory will be mine!"

She dropped her glove to prove his love, then looked on him and smiled;
He bowed, and in a moment leaped among the lions wild;
The leap was quick, return was quick, he has regained his place,
Then threw the glove,—but not with love,—right in the lady's face.
"By Heaven!" said Francis, "rightly done!" and he rose from where he sat;
"No love," quoth he, "but vanity, sets love a task like that."

IPHIGENEIA AND AGAMEMNON [1]

Walter Savage Landor

Iphigeneia, when she heard her doom
At Aulis, and when all beside the king
Had gone away, took his right hand, and said,
"O father! I am young and very happy.
I do not think the pious Calchas heard
Distinctly what the goddess spake. Old age
Obscures the senses. If my nurse, who knew
My voice so well, sometimes misunderstood
While I was resting on her knee both arms
And hitting it to make her mind my words,

[1] The Goddess, Artemis, angered with Agamemnon, has sought revenge upon him by becalming his fleet, thus frustrating his plan to set sail against Troy. The soothsayer, Calchas, divining this, has counseled Agamemnon to sacrifice his daughter Iphigeneia upon Artemis' altar.

And looking in her face, and she in mine,
Might he not also hear one word amiss,
Spoken from so far off, even from Olympus?"
The father placed his cheek upon her head,
And tears dropped down it, but the king of men
Replied not. Then the maiden spake once more.
"O father! sayst thou nothing? Hear'st thou not
Me, whom thou ever hast, until this hour,
Listened to fondly, and awakened me
To hear my voice amid the voice of birds,
When it was inarticulate as theirs,
And the down deadened it within the nest?"
He moved her gently from him, silent still,
And this, and this alone, brought tears from her,
Although she saw fate nearer: then with sighs,
"I thought to have laid down my hair before
Benignant Artemis, and not have dimmed
Her polished altar with my virgin blood;
I thought to have selected the white flowers
To please the Nymphs, and to have asked of each
By name, and with no sorrowful regret,
Whether, since both my parents willed the change,
I might at Hymen's feet bend my clipped brow;
And (after those who mind us girls the most)
Adore our own Athena, that she would
Regard me mildly with her azure eyes,
But father! to see you no more, and see
Your love, O father! go ere I am gone. . . ."
Gently he moved her off, and drew her back,
Bending his lofty head far over hers,
And the dark depths of nature heaved and burst.
He turned away; not far, but silent still.
She now first shuddered; for in him, so nigh,
So long a silence seemed the approach of death,
And like. Once again she raised her voice.
"O father! if the ships are now detained,
And all your vows move not the gods above,

When the knife strikes me there will be one prayer
The less to them: and purer can there be
Any, or more fervent than the daughter's prayer
For her dear father's safety and success?"
A groan that shook him shook not his resolve.
An aged man now entered, and without
One word, stepped slowly on, and took the wrist
Of the pale maiden. She looked up and saw
The fillet of the priest and calm cold eyes.
Then turned she where her parent stood, and cried,
"O father! grieve no more: the ships can sail."

AFTER BLENHEIM

Robert Southey

It was a summer evening;
  Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he before his cottage-door
  Was sitting in the sun;
And by him sported on the green
  His little grandchild, Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin
  Roll something large and round,
That he beside the rivulet,
  In playing there, had found:
She ran to ask what he had found,
  That was so large and smooth and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,
  Who stood expectant by;
And then the old man shook his head,
  And with a natural sigh,

" 'Tis some poor fellow's skull," said he,
"Who fell in the great victory."

"I find them in my garden,
For there's many here about;
And often, when I go to plough,
The ploughshare turns them out;
For many thousand men," said he,
"Were slain in that great victory."

"Now tell us what 'twas all about,"
Young Peterkin, he cries;
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes;
"Now tell us all about the war,
And what they fought each other for."

"It was the English," Kaspar cried,
"Who put the French to rout;
But what they fought each other for
I could not well make out;
But everybody said," quoth he,
"That 'twas a famous victory."

"My father lived at Blenheim then,
Yon little stream hard by;
They burned his dwelling to the ground,
And he was forced to fly;
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

"With fire and sword the country round
Was wasted far and wide,
And many a childing mother then,
And new-born baby, died;
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

"They say it was a choking sight
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun:
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.

"Great praise the Duke of Marlborough won
And our good Prince Eugene."
"Why, 'twas a very wicked thing!"
Said little Wilhelmine.
"Nay, nay, my little girl," quoth he,
"It was a famous victory.

"And everybody praised the Duke,
Who this great fight did win,"
"But what good came of it at last?"
Quoth little Peterkin.
"Why, that I cannot tell," said he;
"But 'twas a famous victory."

II

Eloquence in Speeches and Essays

THE PILGRIMS AND THE SEA [1]

William Bolitho

A Pilgrims' Dinner is out of place for bad news: its seven courses and four good wines, the soft liqueurs, the excellent cigars are preparation for mutual compliment, not for writings on the wall. It is the choice occasion for after-dinner speech, such as well-dined bankers use; the last audience for homely untruths about "our Transatlantic cousins," and comforting, anecdotic replies. Here prominent editors from the Middle West have their dislike for British ways drowned in a champagne-cup; here English Princes address the English-speaking world, and remind it of Shakespeare and the Abbey, to thunderous applause. It is the temple feast of Anglo-Saxon diplomacy; good humoured, useful, innocent, where the flowers of our common speech grow before every plate in peace.

Yet even to this dinner, where never anything worse than a platitude was uttered, the rough realities forced their way. The *Leviathan* was docked at Southampton; the English companies had agreed to leave her stokers alone. To celebrate these two events the Toastmaster was booked by telephone; a menu framed; the passengers invited. And at the point of eight, the cloak-room was glutted with opera hats, and a torrent of thirsty Pilgrims choked the stairs and the approaches to the bar. Everyone was cheerful; black silk waistcoats and "tuxedos" mingled as amicably as ever with tail-coats and miniature medals; and horn-rimmed spectacles peered benevolently into gold pince-nez. By the consent of all, the *Leviathan* was reckoned as an ordinary boat, and details of the deck games, not of the engine-room run, were sought and given.

So when the Toastmaster, in his scarlet hunting coat, with that voice that has converted more to old tradition than any speech, bellowed: "Pray silence, milords and gentlemen," we drank the toast of

[1] Reprinted from *Leviathan* by permission of the author.

King and President with old-time zeal. The Chairman was Lord Desborough; he spoke *extempore*. To this fatal imprudence I attribute what followed. Old hands will do it: light their pipes in mines, strike matches in ships' magazines, and let their long experience lull them. Lord Desborough had breathed that air so long, that he has forgot its peril. He has heard "Hands across the Sea" so often, that he let himself slip for once into the belief that it had come to pass, and that the great object was already accomplished, and that the Sister nations' destinies can never clash; he forgot the *Leviathan*; and made his chairman's speech without notes.

Even so it was a very small match; an amiable, well-meant match, struck in calm air, with not a single notice-board in sight. He had discovered that, by a remarkable coincidence, a touching coincidence which showed the extraordinarily close relations between the two nations, his right-hand neighbour, guest of honour, was born on the Warwickshire estates of the Desboroughs, and went to the village school. No wonder he was the only Judge of the Supreme Court that stood out against the strict application of the Volstead Amendment. "Pray silence, milords and gentlemen, please, for his Honour, Justice Sutherland, of the United States Supreme Court," shouted warmly, benevolently, the Toastmaster, as pleasantly interested as anyone.

The Judge finds that a small beard hides injudicious emotion as well as any wig. Without a blink he pronounced judgment for the British Common Law, the Mother of Constitutions, in the exact terms that he had intended. Only when he had quite finished did he look round the journalists and refer to the turkey that Lord Desborough has just presented him with in open court. He did it charmingly, mildly; without losing his head, refused the compromising bird. There are no hyphenated Englishmen in America, he was proud to declare, there was no divided allegiance. Why did he not sit down, then, under those cheers? *Extempore* speaking is a contagious pest, like the St. Vitus dance. Even Judges are not immune. Justice Sutherland went on to speak of the great effort America was making on the seas, of which that noble boat, the *Leviathan*, was the proud forerunner. It was done. The subject that never, never must be spoken of had leapt up, invested with all the uncontrollable momentums of free, *extempore*, after-dinner oratory. The Red Toastmaster coughed.

He is a man of wide experience. Every Englishman assumed the stony smile, which foreign talk of sea rivalry always produces. Germans have seen that smile; but it was before the war. Frenchmen, lightly jesting about submarines at Washington, have been favoured with a glimpse of the same phenomenon. Talk to a banker of the lovableness of Lenin; open a conversation with a Spaniard on his wife; invite an Italian to explain to you the whole truth about Caporetto; but leave an Englishman's sea alone when you are with him. A quiver ran round the long tables, and automatically, as if moved with a spontaneous curiosity, every Englishman took up the menu and began to read it earnestly. And every American who was to speak, moved by the intoxication of doing something wrong, pushed his hand into his coat pocket and tore up his notes.

Pray silence, milords and gentlemen, for the Right Honourable the President of the Board of Trade. The youngest member of the Cabinet felt like the leader of a rescue party, when the first sniff of fire-damp comes to his nostrils at the head of the pit shaft. All depended on him; he put his trust in length. He has a good head for figures; his memory is stuffed with anecdote; his speech was well-prepared. For double his allotted time, he stood bravely in the gap; covering the forbidden subject; burying it with words, trying to distract attention, as babies are comforted, by talking earnestly of other things. Cold, not fatigue, conquered him at last; the extreme and freezing ice of those absent-minded smiles, that stuck unmelted on those red, honest faces with the persistence of plaster. Pray silence, milords and gentlemen, please, for an honourable Senator.

The next speaker was a man of the world, Senator Nicholas Longworth. He felt that this matter should be cleared up; and that candid, open explanation in a friendly spirit by himself was the only way to do it. He knew the English country-gentleman; they were both sportsmen and could understand each other. Alas, he appealed to everyone to look at this sea-rivalry in a sporting spirit. America was going to try to whip you; to build the biggest, best merchant-service in the world; she only asked for a fair field and no favour. Did not all those English hearts love a good fight? So, with jocularity, which showed up the loneliness of that air, he stumbled on, tripping at every step, yet ever venturing more to make up for each tumble, and

ending with "This is a question of sport, and there does not exist an American, nor an Englishman, whom the prospect does not overjoy."

Oh, very, muttered the Toastmaster. Pray silence, milords and gentlemen, please, for Senator Reed Smoot. The moment had now arrived, and the man with it. He enjoyed it, and kept a little silence before he began; while the English learnt from their neighbours that this was a Senator from the fastness of the Mormons; an orator, a Westerner, Simon-pure. "We have heard a lot to-night of the part English blood plays in the making of our great America. We admit it, we are proud of it. But the day has gone past when New England counts over the water. Look at so and so. Middle West. And another from Colorado. And I myself come from the great and mighty Rocky Mountains."

Then the Senator explained. He has a curious eloquence, heightened by strange exotic appeals to the Lord, which have something of the English Puritan in them, but sound like the calling of a Moslem mullah on his Allah. As he warmed to his story, his straight mouth opened and shut like a steel clutch. His words were English; even his phrases might have been used by a village preacher in Essex. But his accent, harsh, with nothing of the grave rusticity of the Judge, or the lazy comfortable drawl of the millionaire, was fresh to English ears; excellently fitted for the businesslike apocalypse he was reciting to them.

No need for him to tell, but he did, that he had no drop of British blood in his veins, and yet had no other tongue; this was no subvariety of Elizabethan, but as foreign as Russian, that yet by a pure chance we can understand. He kept back nothing of what his huge race were thinking, what they meant by the *Leviathan*. Closing the eyes, one imagined that he was angry, this hard trap-jawed man; but the calmness of his face showed that he was simply explaining. That his country were looking to the sea; that they meant to have a fair share of world trade. We have no traditions to live down to; we will organise the trade of sailor as we have done that of automobile factories. Gone the days of little pay and hazing. The sea is an economical proposition. Heresy after heresy, audacities piled on each other to build up an immense, hideous truth. America was serious about the sea; the *Leviathan* was no panflash, no daring political job which would be forgotten, as we had comforted ourselves, but the

first step in a serious, thought-out campaign to have the biggest merchant fleet in the world. Germany's place; perhaps even more. Worse still, she might do it; with those unheard-of ideas of making seamen workmen, not underpaid adepts at a semi-sacred calling. If so, the whole basis of shipping would be blown up, transformed; every branch of the oldest occupation of the English utterly transformed. A horrifying thought. Looking at the Mormon Senator it almost looked as if he and his friends might succeed; uncultured, unhandicapped men. Supposing ——

Pray silence, milords and gentlemen, please, for the Chairman. He had sat through these avalanches which his first careless foot had stirred, with admirable composure. A little more colour in his face; a certain obstinacy in keeping his eyes to the table cloth. Well, gentlemen, we have listened to some plain speaking to-night. I suppose that is always to the good. The exact note; a different strength to that of the Mormon; just as impressive. The one a rough, biting wind; the other a tree, an oak, built for storms. We had looked for a moment into the future, the hundred years to come; where new worlds are making; at the price of the huge struggles of empires and ideas. And in the midst of it, gripped in a passionless lockhold: these two, the noble Lord Chairman, broad-shouldered, quiet, immovable; the thin, fierce resistless senator; the eternal flux and reflux; the old and the new.

THE EXECUTION OF LOUIS XVI[1]

Thomas Carlyle

PLACE DE LA RÉVOLUTION

TO THIS conclusion, then, hast thou come, O hapless Louis! The Son of Sixty Kings is to die on the Scaffold by form of Law. Under Sixty Kings this same form of Law, form of Society, has

[1] From *The French Revolution.*

been fashioning itself together, these thousand years; and has become, one way and other, a most strange Machine. Surely, if needful, it is also frightful, this Machine: dead, blind; not what it should be; which, with swift stroke, or by cold slow torture, has wasted the lives and souls of innumerable men. And behold now a King himself, or say rather Kinghood in his person, is to expire here in cruel tortures—like a Phalaris shut in the belly of his own red-heated Brazen Bull! It is ever so; and thou shouldst know it, O haughty tyrannous man: injustice breeds injustice; curses and falsehoods do verily return "always *home*," wide as they may wander. Innocent Louis bears the sins of many generations. He, too, experiences that man's tribunal is not in this Earth; that if he had no Higher one, it were not well with him.

A King dying by such violence appeals impressively to the imagination; as the like must do, and ought to do. And yet at bottom it is not the King dying, but the man! Kingship is a coat; the grand loss is of the skin. The man from whom you take his Life, to him can the whole combined world do *more*? Lally went on his hurdle; his mouth filled with a gag. Miserablest mortals, doomed for picking pockets, have a whole five-act tragedy in them, in that dumb pain, as they go to the gallows, unregarded; they consume the cup of trembling down to the lees. For Kings and for Beggars, for the justly doomed and the unjustly, it is a hard thing to die. Pity them all; thy utmost pity, with all aids and appliances and throne-and-scaffold contrasts, how far short is it of the thing pitied!

A Confessor has come; Abbé Edgeworth, of Irish extraction, whom the King knew by good report, has come promptly on this solemn mission. Leave the Earth alone, then, thou hapless King—it with its malice will go its way; thou also canst go thine. A hard scene yet remains: the parting with our loved ones. Kind hearts, environed in the same grim peril with us; to be left *here*! Let the reader look with the eyes of Valet Cléry, through these glass doors, where also the Municipality watches; and see the cruelest of scenes: "At half-past eight, the door of the anteroom opened; the Queen appeared first, leading her Son by the hand; then Madame Royale and Madame Elizabeth; they all flung themselves into the arms of the King. Silence reigned for some minutes, interrupted only by sobs. The Queen

made a movement to lead his Majesty toward the inner room, where M. Edgeworth was waiting unknown to them. 'No,' said the King, 'let us go into the dining-room; it is there only that I can see you.' They entered there; I shut the door of it, which was of glass. The King sat down, the Queen on his left hand, Madame Elizabeth on his right, Madame Royale almost in front; the young Prince remained standing between his father's legs. They all leaned toward him, and often held him embraced. This scene of woe lasted an hour and three-quarters, during which we could hear nothing; we could see only that always when the King spoke, the sobbings of the Princesses redoubled, continued for some minutes; and that then the King began again to speak." And so our meetings and our partings do now end! The sorrows we gave each other; the poor joys we faithfully shared; and all our lovings and our sufferings, and confused toilings under the earthly sun are over. Thou good soul, I shall never, never through all ages of Time, see thee any more!—NEVER! O Reader, knowest thou that hard word?

For nearly two hours this agony lasts; then they tear themselves asunder. "Promise that you will see us on the morrow." He promises —ah, yes, yes; yet once; and go now, ye loved ones; cry to God for yourselves and me!—It was a hard scene, but it is over. He will not see them on the morrow. The Queen, in passing through the anteroom, glanced at the Cerberus Municipals; and, with woman's vehemence, said through her tears, "*Vous êtes tous des scélérats.*"

King Louis slept sound, till five in the morning, when Cléry, as he had been ordered, awoke him. Cléry dressed his hair. While this went forward, Louis took a ring from his watch and kept trying it on his finger; it was his wedding-ring, which he is now to return to the Queen as a mute farewell. At half-past six he took the sacrament, and continued in devotion and conference with Abbé Edgeworth. He will not see his family; it were too hard to bear.

At eight the Municipals enter. The King gives them his Will and messages and effects; which they, at first, brutally refuse to take charge of. He gives them a roll of gold pieces, a hundred and twenty-five louis; these are to be returned to Malesherbes, who had lent them. At nine Santerre says the hour is come. The King begs yet to retire for three minutes. At the end of three minutes Santerre again

says the hour is come. "Stamping on the ground with his right foot, Louis answers: '*Partons*, Let us go.' "—How the rolling of those drums comes in, through the Temple bastions and bulwarks, on the heart of a queenly wife, soon to be a widow! He is gone, then, and has not seen us? A Queen weeps bitterly; a King's Sister and Children. Over all these Four does Death also hover—all shall perish miserably save one; she, as Duchesse d'Angoulême, will live—not happily.

At the Temple Gate were some faint cries, perhaps from voices of pitiful women: "*Grace! Grace!*" Through the rest of the streets there is silence as of the grave. No man not armed is allowed to be there; the armed, did any even pity, dare not express it, each man overawed by all his neighbors. All windows are down, none seen looking through them. All shops are shut. No wheel-carriage rolls, this morning, in these streets but one only. Eighty thousand armed men stand ranked, like armed statues of men; cannons bristle, cannoneers with match burning, but no word or movement. It is as a city enchanted into silence and stone; one carriage with its escort, slowly rumbling, is the only sound. Louis reads, in his Book of Devotion, the Prayers of the Dying; clatter of this death-march falls sharp on the ear, in the great silence; but the thought would fain struggle heavenward, and forget the Earth.

As the clocks strike ten, behold the Place de la Révolution, once Place de Louis Quinze; the Guillotine, mounted near the old Pedestal where once stood the Statue of that Louis! Far round, all bristles with cannons and armed men; spectators crowding in the rear; d'Orléans Égalité there in cabriolet. Swift messengers, *hoquetons*, speed to the Townhall, every three minutes; near by is the Convention sitting—vengeful for Lepelletier. Heedless of all, Louis reads his Prayers of the Dying; not till five minutes yet has he finished; then the carriage opens. What temper he is in? Ten different witnesses will give ten different accounts of it. He is in the collision of all tempers; arrived now at the black maelstrom and descent of death: in sorrow, in indignation, in resignation struggling to be resigned. "Take care of M. Edgeworth," he straitly charges the Lieutenant who is sitting with them; then they two descend.

The drums are beating: "*Taisez-vous*, Silence!" he cries in a ter-

rible voice, "*d'une voix terrible.*" He mounts the scaffold, not without delay; he is in puce coat, breeches of gray, white stockings. He strips off the coat; stands disclosed in a sleeve-waistcoat of white flannel. The Executioners approach to bind him; he spurns, resists; Abbé Edgeworth has to remind him how the Savior, in whom men trust, submitted to be bound. His hands are tied, his head bare; the fatal moment is come. He advances to the edge of the Scaffold, "his face very red," and says: "Frenchmen, I die innocent; it is from the scaffold and near appearing before God that I tell you so. I pardon my enemies; I desire that France ——" A general on horseback, Santerre or another, prances out, with uplifted hand: "*Tambours!*" The drums drown the voice. "Executioners, do your duty!" The Executioners, desperate lest themselves be murdered (for Santerre and his armed ranks will strike, if they do not), seize the hapless Louis; six of them desperate, him singly desperate, struggling there, and bind him to their plank. Abbé Edgeworth, stooping, bespeaks him: "Son of Saint Louis, ascend to Heaven." The Ax clanks down; a King's Life is shorn away. It is Monday, the 21st of January, 1793. He was aged Thirty-eight years, four months, and twenty-eight days.

Executioner Samson shows the Head; fierce shout of *Vive la République* rises, and swells; caps raised on bayonets, hats waving. Students of the College of Four Nations take it up, on the far Quais; fling it over Paris. D'Orléans drives off in his cabriolet; the Townhall Councilors rub their hands, saying, "It is done, It is done." There is dipping of handkerchiefs, of pike-points in the blood. Headsman Samson, though he afterwards denied it, sells locks of the hair; fractions of the puce coat are long after worn in rings.—And so, in some half hour it is done; and the multitude has all departed. Pastrycooks, coffee-sellers, milkmen sing out their trivial quotidian cries; the world wags on, as if this were a common day. In the coffee-houses that evening, says Prudhomme, Patriot shook hands with Patriot in a more cordial manner than usual. Not till some days after, according to Mercier, did public men see what a grave thing it was.

ON THE ANNEXATION OF HAWAII[1]

Champ Clark

ANNEXATIONISTS, with one accord, will pooh-pooh the idea of danger to the republic, and will solemnly asseverate that the acquisition of Hawaii does not presage further territorial expansion.

Believe them not, Mr. Speaker. Put not your faith in jingoes. Study that strange and intricate machine, the human heart. Consider the unconquerable Anglo-Saxon lust for land. Revolve in your mind whether greed has ever yet set limits to its possessions. Reflect upon the question whether the rolling snowball grows larger or smaller on its journey down the hill. Gaze on the picture of the Macedonian madman, drunk in the palace of the Babylonian kings, mingling his tears with his wine because there were no more worlds to conquer.

Remember Napoleon's dazzling dream of universal empire, and how he ended dismally, the modern Prometheus bound to the rock of St. Helena with the vulture of ambition preying on his vitals.

Think of the sad plaint of Queen Mary, who so mourned her lost French city as to declare after death they would find the word "Calais" engraved upon her heart.

Recall the almost incredible story of how Frederick the Great bravely and doggedly waged what to all others seemed a hopeless fight with his multitudinous enemies; during which his fortunes were so desperate and his literary ambition so great that he carried a bottle of corrosive sublimate in one pocket and a ream of his own lame verses in the other; and how at the end of the Seven Years' War all Europe in arms could not wrest Silesia from his iron grasp.

Review the whole history of the human race, and tell us how many rulers have ever willingly alienated one foot of land over which they exercised dominion.

There is only one, and he shines forth a bright particular star among the sovereigns of the earth: the Emperor Adrian, who volun-

[1] Passages given here are from the middle and close of the speech made in the House of Representatives in 1898, opposing the annexation of Hawaii.
Quoted from *Modern Eloquence*, Vol. X, by courtesy of the editor.

tarily relinquished vast territories, thereby setting bounds to the empire and preserving its life for centuries.

If we annex Hawaii, and you, Mr. Speaker, should preside here twenty years hence, it may be that you will have a polyglot House, and it will be your painful duty to recognize "the gentleman from Patagonia," "the gentleman from Cuba," "the gentleman from Santo Domingo," "the gentleman from Corea," "the gentleman from Hongkong," "the gentleman from Fiji," "the gentleman from Greenland," or, with fear and trembling, "the gentleman from the Cannibal Islands," who will gaze upon you with watering mouth and gleaming teeth. (Great laughter and applause.)

In that stupendous day there will be a new officer within these historic walls, whose title will be "Interpreter to the Speaker," for your ears will be assailed by speech in as many discordant voices as were heard at the confusion of tongues on the plain of Shinar at the foot of the unfinished Tower of Babel. (Applause.)

For whose benefit and behoof are we to do this preposterous thing? Not for ourselves or our children, surely; for Hawaii has a tropical climate, beneath whose burning, blistering sun no Anglo-American can work outdoors.

Why not learn something from the great historic and scientific fact —for fact it is, though it may be amazing—that Teutonic civilization and representative government are coextensive with the wheat belt? They are exotics in the tropics, and will wither and perish there.

Who is back of this annexation scheme? Who has worked up a sentiment in its favor? Who has maintained a lobby here to labor for its success? Who has enlisted a portion of the public press, and caused it to question the patriotism and cast insinuations against the integrity of the men who have the courage, the wisdom, and the patriotism to fight this colossal job?

I was long since taught that it is a sound practice, when trying to fix responsibility for a crime, to search for the person or persons who would reap the greatest profit from its commission.

Applying that rule of common sense to this case, to what conclusion are we irresistibly led? To this: That the sugar kings of the Sandwich Islands are the chief promoters of the scheme, because they are easily the chief beneficiaries. Even the holders of Hawaiian

bonds are not in it with them, because all the bonds ever issued by the Dole government are not equal to the profits which the sugar kings will make out of annexation in each and every year henceforth and forever so long as they shall live, because annexation will make raw Hawaiian sugar come in free, and the sugar kings will pocket the tariff on the same, which amounts, under the blessed Dingley Bill, to millions of dollars annually, and will grow as the Hawaiian sugar output increases, and is really a gift from us, which already exceeds $65,000,000.

But it will be answered that reciprocity already lets Hawaiian sugar in free, and therefore the kings have and can have no interest in annexation. Do not believe that for one moment, Mr. Speaker. The reciprocity treaty is a tip-top thing for the kings, but it is only temporary in its nature, and annexation would be a permanent blessing to them. I do not know much about stocks; I have had no experience with the ticker; but mark my prediction: the moment annexation is an assured fact, sugar stocks will soar skyward—a direction in which their owners will never go. To this low estate have we fallen at last that the sugar kings of the Sandwich Islands force us from the safe, wise, honorable policy of one hundred and nine years into a new, dubious, and untried policy which endangers our prosperity and is a menace to our very existence.

We hear much of "manifest destiny." That is a charming phrase. It tickles the ears of men; it panders to human vanity; it feeds the lurid flames of our ambitions; it whets the sword of conquest; it is an anodyne for the troubled conscience, but it lureth to destruction. At the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder. It is, however, no new doctrine. It is as old as the hills, "rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun." Years and years ago, stripped of all disguises and adornments, it was formulated by that eminent annexationist, Rob Roy, in this plain, blunt language:—

> The good old rule, the simple plan,
> That they should take who have the power,
> And they should keep who can.

Moses placed his veto on this convenient theory of "manifest destiny" when with inspired pen on tables of stone he wrote this stern

command, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's lands." Even in this presence, I beg leave to suggest that the Decalogue is a moral code, not for the temporary and exclusive use of the disgruntled children of Israel, footsore and weary with wandering in the wilderness, but is applicable to all persons in all countries and at all times; for the principles of right and wrong are eternal, and do not change with latitude and longitude, or with the lapsing years, or with the various tongues of men.

"Manifest destiny" has been the specious plea of every robber and freebooter since the world began, and will continue to be until the elements shall melt with fervent heat.

It was "manifest destiny" which led Lot to overreach his uncle Abraham in selecting the rich lands of the valley, and you remember the weird story of Sodom and Gomorrah.

The "manifest destiny" of Jacob enabled him to appropriate the birthright of his luckless brother Esau.

"Manifest destiny" led Philip's invincible son across the sea, across the Granicus, even to farthest Ind, to build up an immense empire, which crumbled to pieces at his death.

"Manifest destiny" sent the Roman emperors to the burning sands of Africa, to the impenetrable forests of Gaul, to the inhospitable mountains of Asia, to the bottomless bogs of England, and at last put up the imperial crown for sale at auction to the highest bidder.

"Manifest destiny" caused Bajazet to desolate the fairest portions of Asia, and he ended by being hauled around in an iron cage as a ravening wild beast, which he was.

"Manifest destiny" impelled mad Charles of Sweden to put all northern Europe to the sword until he met his Nemesis in Peter the Great at Pultowa.

"Manifest destiny" was Napoleon's gauzy justification for all the bones bleaching from Toulon to Mount St. Jean. He was always prating about his star; but it disappeared forever in the sunken road of Ohain, and he wandered from the stricken field "the immense somnambulist of a shattered dream."

"Manifest destiny" makes England the great bully of the world, oppressing the weak, toadying to the strong, laying up wrath against

the day of wrath which is as sure to come for her as that a just God reigns on high.

Oh, yes! "Manifest destiny" is a seductive thing. It is the beautiful, the irresistible, the wicked Circe beckoning us on to our undoing. The entire pathway of man since the day when Adam was driven from Eden with flaming swords is black with the wrecks of nations who hearkened to the siren song of "Manifest destiny," and the epitaph upon whose tombstones is "They were, but they are not."

Hitherto we have been the favorites of Heaven; but let us not tempt fate too far or destiny will grow weary of partnership with us and dissolve it as she did with Napoleon at Waterloo.

Hawaii is a blind for our eyes, a snare for our feet, a bait for our cupidity, the will-o'-the-wisp, which will lead us into the Slough of Despond, the bewitching, scheming, treacherous Delilah destined to shear our Samson of his leonine locks and to deliver him bound hand and foot into the power of the Philistines.

Hawaii is the fly which will make our whole pot of ointment stink in the nostrils of the civilized world.

Let us put away this supreme temptation from before our faces, and generations yet unborn will bless us for this act of wisdom, self-abnegation, and patriotism.

Nature has set bounds to this magnificent republic beyond which she should not go—the Atlantic on the east, the Gulf of Mexico and the Rio Grande on the south, the Pacific on the west, and in the fullness of time, without the expenditure of a dollar or the spilling of one drop of blood or the shedding of a single tear, the frozen ocean on the north.

Within those wide, extended limits we will live and grow and flourish, the happiest, the richest, the most puissant, the most intelligent, the securest people on the whole face of the earth.

But depart from the plan of justice, of wisdom, and of moderation, go chasing the *ignis fatuus* of "manifest destiny" over land and over sea, and some day Macaulay's artistic New Zealander, after finishing his picture of the ruins of St. Paul's, will sit on a broken arch of "the Long Bridge" and sketch the ruins of this capitol. Before you consummate this monstrous folly, I say to you, in the language of Galgacus to the ancient Britons, "Think of your forefathers; think of posterity!" (Prolonged applause.)

OUR LADIES OF SORROW [1]

Thomas DeQuincey

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

THESE are the Sorrows; and they are three in number, as the *Graces* are three, who dress man's life with beauty; the *Parcæ* are three, who weave the dark arras of man's life in their mysterious loom always with colours sad in part, sometimes angry with tragic crimson and black; the *Furies* are three, who visit with retributions called from the other side of the grave offences that walk upon this; and once even the *Muses* were but three, who fit the harp, the trumpet, or the lute, to the great burdens of man's impassioned creations. These are the Sorrows, all three . . .

The eldest of the three is named *Mater Lachrymarum*, Our Lady of Tears. She it is that night and day raves and moans, calling for vanished faces. She stood in Rama, when a voice was heard of lamentation—Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted. She it was that stood in Bethlehem on the night when Herod's sword swept its nurseries of Innocents and the little feet were stiffened forever, which heart at times as they tottered along the floors overhead, woke pulses of love in household hearts that were not unmarked in heaven.

Her eyes are sweet and subtle, wild and sleepy by turns; oftentimes rising to the clouds; oftentimes challenging the heavens. She wears a diadem round her head. And I knew by childish memories that she could go abroad upon the winds, when she heard the sobbing of litanies or the thundering of organs, and when she beheld the mustering of summer clouds. This sister, the elder, it is that carries keys more than papal at her girdle, which open every cottage and every palace. . . .

By the power of her keys it is that Our Lady of Tears glides a ghostly intruder into the chambers of sleepless men, sleepless women, sleepless children. . . .

[1] From *Suspira de Profundis.*

Every captive in every dungeon;—all that are betrayed, and all that are rejected; outcasts by traditionary law, and children of *hereditary disgrace*—all these walk with Our Lady of Sighs. She also carries a key; but she needs it little. For her kingdom is chiefly amongst the tents of Shem, and the houseless vagrant of every clime. Yet in the very highest ranks of man she finds chapels of her own; and even here there are some that, to the world, carry their heads as proudly as the reindeer, who yet secretly have received her mark upon their foreheads.

But the third sister, who is also the youngest—Hush! whisper, whilst we talk of *her*! Her kingdom is not large, or else no flesh should live; but within that kingdom all power is hers. Her head, turreted like that of Cybele, rises almost beyond the reach of sight. She droops not; and her eyes rising so high, *might* be hidden by distance. But, being what they are, they cannot be hidden; through the treble veil of crape which she wears, the fierce light of a blazing misery, that rests not for matins or for vespers—for noon of day or noon of night—for ebbing or for flowing tide—may be read from the very ground. She is the defier of God. She also is the mother of lunacies, and the suggestress of suicides. Deep lie the roots of her power; but narrow is the nation that she rules. For she can approach only those in whom a profound nature has been upheaved by central convulsions; in whom the heart trembles and the brain rocks under conspiracies of tempest from without and tempest from within. Madonna moves with uncertain steps, fast or slow, but still with tragic grace. Our Lady of Sighs creeps timidly and stealthily. But this youngest sister moves with incalculable motions, bounding, and with a tiger's leaps. She carries no key; for, though coming rarely amongst men, she storms all doors at which she is permitted to enter at all. And *her* name is *Mater Tenebrarum*—Our Lady of Darkness.

These are the sorrows; and they are three in number.

"ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT" [1]

Sir Philip Gibbs

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

IT IS hard to believe that eleven years have passed since a bugle here and there sounded the Cease Fire on Armistice Day. Now it is the beginning of a second decade of peace since that War which seemed never-ending in its daily routine of casualties, and boredom, and filth, and fatigue, with odd hours of exaltation, loud laughter, utter carelessness, and sometimes a sense of intense vitality in the near neighborhood of death. The War is getting old in remembrance, and the world is changed. . . . "All Quiet on the Western Front."

Eleven years ago? Why, to great numbers of men, bareheaded in a two minutes' silence, it seems only the day before yesterday. In that short spell of silence they seem to hear again the fury of the guns, never silent up there in the Ypres Salient, or drum fire this side of High Wood or the other side of Arras. Don't you hear it? . . . And what's that queer smell which comes with the reek of old memories? It's the stench of a front-line trench—wet mud, chloride of lime, bodily corruption. Wasn't it yesterday they sat in a dug-out listening to unpleasant noises outside by the light of a candle stuck in a bottle! Where's that baccy tin? What! No more whiskey? Oh, hell!

And there's that old rat again snooping round for a bit of cheese. What's that, sergeant? A night raid? Lord, all that's a dream now, eleven years ago and more. . . . "All Quiet on the Western Front."

There are no guns firing now round the Ypres Salient. The trenches have silted in. The ploughs have been at work in No Man's Land preparing the soil for next year's harvest. There are fields of beet where upheaved earth was strewn with dead bodies and machine-gun belts and tin hats with holes in them. New bells of new churches are chiming across country where a fellow couldn't show his head without

[1] From the *Morning Post*, London conservative daily, reprinted by permission of *The Living Age*.

getting a bullet through his brain. All those towns and villages that were wiped off the map by high explosives have been put back again with raw red roofs. There is hardly a trace of that old war, except where, here and there behind the old lines through France and Flanders, there are rows and rows of graves, very neat, and straightly set, with white headstones inscribed with the names of the army of the dead—nearly a million of them—sleeping there so still. . . . "All Quiet on the Western Front."

So quiet there, it is, in those sanctuaries of peace where women are bringing flowers to-day, beyond the turmoil of a noisy, restless world. Yet the spirit of that army of youth is immortal. Their valor, their whimsicality in foul places, their loyalty and fellowship have not died. That spirit remains alive forever as a divine tradition in the imagination of the world's youth. It stirs in the younger crowd of to-day as they stand for the two minutes' silence, not knowing much about that old war which was fought by their fathers or their elder brothers, but knowing, in their blood and in their souls, that, whatever comes, they must never let down those men who died by any dirty way of cowardice or by any lack of humor when things are bad. The next adventure may not be war. The spirit of the youth who fell calls across the world:—

"Do you not remember our sacrifice? Have you forgotten the crime and the folly that led to our massacre? We died—though we loved life—believing that the youngsters who came after us would find a better kind of world. How about it, you who live?"

What is that sound of singing that comes very softly through the two minutes' silence? Isn't that the noise of tramping feet—the old Division on the march—the transport wagons going up? Can't you hear the bugles sounding the Reveille through the mist? . . . No, our imagination has played a trick on us, surely, unless it was some queer vibration from over there.

There is a great silence in those War cemeteries of France and Flanders. The white headstones stretch away in long straight lines, seemingly endless, in far vistas. There are miles and miles of graves, miles and miles of our buried dead, with here and there, above them, memorials in stone of their old battalions, the legions of our lost youth.

Beyond them and around them, coming closer every month, are

the red roofs of new houses and the walls of new factories and farmsteads where the work of life goes on. There are distant sounds of human labor, the throb of machinery, dogs barking, children laughing. But there is no sound at all—only silence—down the avenues of graves.

"All Quiet on the Western Front."

THE RACE PROBLEM

Henry W. Grady

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

FAR to the South . . . lies the fairest and richest domain of this earth. It is the home of a brave and hospitable people. There is centered all that can please or prosper humankind. A perfect climate above a fertile soil yields to the husbandman every product of the temperate zone. There, by night the cotton whitens beneath the stars, and by day the wheat locks the sunshine in its bearded sheaf. In the same field the clover steals the fragrance of the wind, and tobacco catches the quick aroma of the rains. There are mountains stored with exhaustless treasures; forests—vast and primeval; and rivers that, tumbling or loitering, run wanton to the sea. Of the three essential items of all industries—cotton, iron and wood—that region has easy control. In cotton, a fixed monopoly—in iron, proven supremacy—in timber, the reserve supply of the Republic. From this assured and permanent advantage, against which artificial conditions cannot much longer prevail, has grown an amazing system of industries. Not maintained by human contrivance of tariff or capital, afar off from the fullest and cheapest source of supply, but resting in divine assurance, within touch of field and mine and forest—not set amid costly farms from which competition has driven the farmer in despair, but amid cheap and sunny lands, rich with agriculture, to which neither season nor soil has set a limit—this system of industries is mounting

to a splendor that shall dazzle and illumine the world. That, sir, is the picture and the promise of a land better and fairer than I have told you, and yet but fit setting in its material excellence for the loyal and gentle quality of its citizenship. . . .

And yet—while in the Eldorado of which I have told you but fifteen per cent. of its lands are cultivated, its mines scarcely touched, and its population so scant that, were it set equidistant, the sound of the human voice could not be heard from Virginia to Texas—while on the threshold of nearly every house in New England stands a son, seeking, with troubled eyes, some new land in which to carry his modest patrimony, the strange fact remains that in 1880 the South had fewer northern-born citizens than she had in 1870—fewer in '70 than in '60. Why is this? Why is it, sir, though the section line be now but a mist that the breath may dispel, fewer men of the North have crossed it over to the South, than when it was crimson with the best blood of the Republic, or even when the slaveholder stood guard every inch of its way?

There can be but one answer. It is the very problem we are now to consider. The key that opens that problem will unlock to the world the fairest half of this Republic, and free the halted feet of thousands whose eyes are already kindling with its beauty. Better than this, it will open the hearts of brothers for years estranged, and clasp in lasting comradeship a million hands now withheld in doubt. Nothing, sir, but this problem and the suspicions it breeds, hinders a clear understanding and a perfect union. Nothing else stands between us and such love as bound Georgia and Massachusetts at Valley Forge and Yorktown, chastened by the sacrifices of Manassas and Gettysburg, and illumined with the coming of better work and a nobler destiny than was ever wrought with the sword or sought at the cannon's mouth.

If this does not invite your patient hearing—hear one thing more. Your brothers in the South—brothers in blood, in destiny, in all that is best in our past and future—are so beset with this problem that their very existence depends on its right solution. Nor are they wholly to blame for its presence. The slave-ships of the Republic sailed from your ports, the slaves worked in our fields. You will not defend the traffic, nor I the institution. But I do here declare that in its wise and humane administration in lifting the slave to heights of

which he had not dreamed in his savage home, and giving him a happiness he has not yet found in freedom, our fathers left their sons a saving and excellent heritage. In the storm of war this institution was lost. I thank God as heartily as you do that human slavery is gone forever from American soil. But the free man remains. With him, a problem without precedent or parallel. Note its appalling conditions. Two utterly dissimilar races on the same soil—with equal political and civil rights—almost equal in numbers, but terribly unequal in intelligence and responsibility—each pledged against fusion—one for a century in servitude to the other, and freed at last by a desolating war, the experiment sought by neither but approached by both with doubt—these are the conditions. Under these, adverse at every point, we are required to carry these two races in peace and honor to the end.

Never, sir, has such a task been given to mortal stewardship. Never before in this Republic has the white race divided on the rights of an alien race. The red man was cut down as a weed because he hindered the way of the American citizen. The yellow man was shut out of this Republic because he is an alien, and inferior. The red man was owner of the land—the yellow man was highly civilized and assimilable—but they hindered both sections and are gone! But the black man, affecting but one section, is clothed with every privilege of government and pinned to the soil, and our people commanded to make good at any hazard, and at any cost, his full and equal heirship of American privilege and prosperity. It matters not that every other race has been routed or excluded without rime or reason. It matters not that wherever the whites and the blacks have touched, in any era or in any clime, there has been an irreconcilable violence. It matters not that no two races, however similar, have lived anywhere, at any time, on the same soil with equal rights in peace! In spite of these things we are commanded to make good this change of American policy which has not perhaps changed American prejudice—to make certain here what has elsewhere been impossible between whites and blacks—and to reverse, under the very worst conditions, the universal verdict of racial history. And driven, sir, to this superhuman task with an impatience that brooks no delay—a rigor that accepts no excuse—and a suspicion that discourages frankness and sincerity. We do not shrink from this trial. It is so interwoven with our indus-

trial fabric that we cannot disentangle it if we would—so bound up in our honorable obligation to the world, that we would not if we could.

. . . . . .

The resolute, clear-headed, broad-minded men of the South—the men whose genius made glorious every page of the first seventy years of American history—whose courage and fortitude were tested in five years of the fiercest war—whose energy has made bricks without straw and spread splendor amid the ashes of their war-wasted homes—these men wear this problem in their hearts and brains, by day and by night. They realize, as you cannot, what this problem means—what they owe to this kindly and dependent race—the measure of their debt to the world in whose despite they defended and maintained slavery. And though their feet are hindered in its undergrowth, and their march cumbered with its burdens, they have lost neither the patience from which comes clearness, nor the faith from which comes courage. . . .

But what of the problem itself? We need not go one step further unless you concede right here that the people I speak for are as honest, as sensible and as just as your people, seeking as earnestly as you would in their place to rightly solve the problem that touches them at every vital point. If you insist that they are ruffians, blindly striving with bludgeon and shotgun to plunder and oppress a race, then I shall sacrifice my self-respect and tax your patience in vain. But admit that they are men of common sense and common honesty, wisely modifying an environment they cannot wholly disregard—guiding and controlling as best they can the vicious and irresponsible of either race—compensating error with frankness, and retrieving in patience what they lost in passion—and conscious all the time that wrong means ruin—admit this, and we may reach an understanding.

. . . . . .

What solution, then, can we offer for the problem? Time alone can disclose it to us. We simply report progress, and ask your patience. If the problem be solved at all—and I firmly believe it will, though nowhere else has it been—it will be solved by the people most deeply bound in interest, most deeply pledged in honor to its solution. I had rather see my people render back this question rightly

solved than to see them gather all the spoils over which faction has contended since Cataline conspired and Cæsar fought. Meantime we treat the negro fairly, measuring to him justice in the fullness the strong should give to the weak, and leading him in the steadfast ways of citizenship, that he may no longer be the prey of the unscrupulous and the sport of the thoughtless. We open to him every pursuit in which he can prosper, and seek to broaden his training and capacity. We seek to hold his confidence and friendship—and to pin him to the soil with ownership, that he may catch in the fire of his own hearthstone that sense of responsibility the shiftless can never know. And we gather him into that alliance of intelligence and responsibility that, though it now runs close to racial lines, welcomes the responsible and intelligent of any race. By this course, confirmed in our judgment, and justified in the progress already made, we hope to progress slowly but surely to the end.

The love we feel for that race, you cannot measure nor comprehend. . . . I catch a vision of the crisis of battle—a soldier, struck, staggering, fallen. I see a slave, scuffling through the smoke, winding his black arms about the fallen form, reckless of hurtling death—bending his trusty face to catch the words that tremble on the stricken lips, so wrestling meantime with agony that he would lay down his life in his master's stead. I see him by the weary bedside, ministering with uncomplaining patience, praying with all his humble heart that God will lift his master up, until death comes in mercy and in honor to still the soldier's agony and seal the soldier's life. I see him by the open grave—mute, motionless, uncovered, suffering for the death of him who in life fought against his freedom. I see him, when the mold is heaped and the great drama of his life is closed, turn away and with downcast eyes and uncertain step start out into new and strange fields, faltering, struggling, but moving on, until his shambling figure is lost in the light of this better and brighter day. And from the grave comes a voice, saying, "Follow him! put your arms about him in his need, even as he put his about me. Be his friend as he was mine." And out into this new world—strange to me as to him, dazzling, bewildering both—I follow! And may God forget my people—when they forget these!

Whatever the future may hold for them, whether they plod

along in the servitude from which they have never been lifted since the Cyrenian was laid hold upon by the Roman soldiers, and made to bear the cross of the fainting Christ—whether they find homes again in Africa, and thus hasten the prophecy of the psalmist, who said, "And suddenly Ethiopia shall hold out her hands unto God"—whether forever dislocated and separate, they remain a weak people, beset by stronger, and exist, as the Turk, who lives in the jealousy rather than in the conscience of Europe—or whether in this miraculous Republic they break through the caste of twenty centuries and, belying universal history, reach the full stature of citizenship, and in peace maintain it—we shall give them uttermost justice and abiding friendship. And whatever we do, into whatever seeming estrangement we may be driven, nothing shall disturb the love we bear this Republic, or mitigate our consecration to its service.

A TOAST TO "MERE MAN" AND HIS RESPONSE [1]

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

"MERE MAN"

Sarah Grand

MR. CHAIRMAN:—I have the honor to propose the toast of "Mere Man" (laughter), but why "Mere Man," I want to know? I decline to be identified with such an expression: I decline to be accused of calling man any names (laughter), any names that I have not already called him. (Laughter.) I do not decline out of consideration for mere man altogether, but in self-defense. To use

[1] Delivered at the annual Ladies' Banquet of the Whitefriar's Club, London, England, May 4, 1900. Max O'Rell acted as toast-master and delivered his speech in responding to the remarks of Sarah Grand, who had spoken to the toast of "Mere Man."
Reprinted from *Modern Eloquence*, Vol. II, by courtesy of the editor.
This after-dinner speech situation can be dramatized by assigning the speeches to two students according to sex who endeavor to recreate the genial graciousness of these distinguished speakers and the mood of the occasion.

such an expression deprives me of any dignity which I might myself derive from the dignity of my subject. . . . My comfort is that no one can accuse me of having originated such an expression, because it is well known no woman ever originated anything. (Laughter.) I assure you I have seen it so stated in print; and in one article I read on the subject the perturbation of the writer, lest there should be any mistake about it, so agitated his grammar that it was impossible to parse it. I should like to know who was responsible in the first place for the expression which has been imposed upon me. It seems to me there is strong presumptive evidence that it was by man himself that man was dubbed mere man. If the lords of creation choose to masquerade sometimes as mere man by all means let them.

The saying is, "In small things, liberty; in great things, unity; in all things, charity," but when you meet a man who describes himself as a mere man, you would always do well to ask what he wants, because, since man first swung himself from his bough in the forest primeval and stood upright on two legs he has never assumed that position for nothing. (Laughter.) My own private opinion, which I confide to you, knowing it will go no further, is that he assumes that tone, as a rule to draw sovran woman. (Laughter.) Mere man is a paradoxical creature—it is not always possible to distinguish between his sober earnest and his leg-pulling exercises. (Laughter.) One has to be on one's guard, and woe be to the woman who in these days displays that absence of the sense of humor which is such a prominent characteristic of our comic papers. (Laughter.) I do not mean to say for a moment that man assumes his "mere man" tone for unpleasant purposes. On the contrary, he assumes it for party purposes as a rule—for dinner party purposes. (Laughter.) When man is in his mere man mood sovran woman would do well to ask for anything that she wants—for it is then that he holds the scepter out to her. (Laughter.)

Personally, and speaking as a woman whose guiding principle through life has been never to do anything for herself that she can get a nice man to do for her (laughter), a principle which I have found entirely successful, and which I strongly recommend to every other woman—personally I have always found mere man an excellent comrade. (Applause.) . . .

. . . If you had asked me as a child who ran to help me when I fell, I should have answered, "My daddy." When a woman begins life with a prejudice of this kind she never gets over it. The prejudice of a man for his mother is feeble in comparison with the prejudice of a woman for her father, when she has had a man for her father and not one of what Shelley called, those ——

Things whose trade is over ladies
To lean and flirt and stare and simper,
Till all that is divine in woman
Grows cruel, courteous, smooth, inhuman,
Crucified 'twixt a smile and whimper.

Whatever that woman has to suffer, she never loses her faith in man. Remembering what her father was, she always believes there are good men and true in the world somewhere. The recollection of her father becomes a buffer between that woman and the shocks and jars of her after life; because of him, there is nothing distorted in her point of view, and she remains sane. It rather spoils a woman in some ways to have a good husband as well as a good father because then she is so sure that

God's in His heaven,
All's right with the world,

that she becomes utterly selfish, and cares for nothing that is outside her own little circle. But the thing to guard against is loss of faith. Men and women who have lost faith in each other never rise above the world again—one wing is broken and they cannot soar. It has been said that the best way to manage man is to feed the brute (laughter), but sovran woman never made that discovery for herself—I believe it was man in his mere man mood who first confided the secret to some young wife in distress—somebody else's young wife. (Laughter.) Feed him and flatter him. Why not? Is there anything more delightful in this world than to be flattered and fed? Let us do as we would be done by. It seems to me sometimes that it is impossible in reviewing our social relations ever to be wholly in earnest. One's opinions do wobble so. (Laughter.) If one would earn a reputation for consistency one must be like that great judge who

declined to hear more than one side of the case because he found that hearing the other side only confused him. (Laughter.)

The thing about mere man which impresses me most, which fills me with the greatest respect, is not his courage in the face of death, but the courage with which he faces life. The way in which we face death is not necessarily more heroic than the way in which we face life. The probability is that you never think less about yourself than you do at the moment when you and eternity are face to face. When you are sick unto death you are too sick to care whether you live or die. In some great convulsion of nature, a great typhoon, for instance, when the wind in its fury lashes the walls of the house till they writhe, and there are the shrieks of people in dire distress, and fire, and the crash of giant waves, and all that makes for horror, the shock of these brute irresponsible forces of nature is too tremendous for fear to obtrude. Thought is suspended—you are in an ecstasy of awful emotion, emotion made perfect by the very strength of it.

But when it comes to facing life day after day, and day after day, as so many men have to face it, the workingmen, in all classes of society, upon whom the home depends, men whose days are only too often a weary effort, and whose nights are an ache of anxiety lest the strength should give out which means bread, when one thinks of the lives these men live, and the way in which they live, the brave, uncomplaining way in which they fight to the death for those dear to them, when one considers mere man from this point of view, one is moved to enthusiasm, and one is fain to confess that "sovran woman" on a pedestal is a poor sort of creature compared with this kind of mere man, in that so often she not only fails to help and cheer him in his heroic efforts, but to appreciate that he is making any effort at all. I positively refuse to subscribe to the assertion, "How poor a thing is man!" (Laughter.) It takes more genius to be a man than manhood to be a genius. (Applause.) As to the differences between men and women, I believe that when finally their accounts have been properly balanced it will be found that it has been a case of six of one and half-a-dozen of the other, both in the matter of sovereignty and of mereness (laughter), and, therefore, without prejudice, I propose that the sixes to which I belong shall rise and cordially drink to the health of the other half dozens, our kind and generous hosts of to-night. (Applause.)

MONSIEUR AND MADAME

Paul Blouet
(Max O'Rell)

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—I have to attempt the praise of man, and I do not feel equal to it. I have half a mind to let the case go against him, but I consider Madame Sarah Grand has let us off pretty easy. Well, we are not quite so bad as we are painted sometimes. I believe half the lies that are told about men are not true. (Laughter.) We are in the habit of running ourselves down, to summon women to our help, but we do not believe a word of it. We are very much like those English people who at Church call themselves miserable sinners, and would knock down on the spot anyone who would take them at their word on coming out of church. (Laughter.)

Now the attitude of men towards women is very different, according to the different nations to which they belong. You will find a good illustration of that different attitude of men towards women in France, in England, and in America, if you go to the dining-rooms of their hotels. You go to the dining-room, and you take, if you can, a seat near the entrance door, and you watch the arrival of the couples, and also watch them as they cross the room and go to the table that is assigned to them by the head-waiter. Now, in Europe, you would find a very polite head-waiter, who invites you to go in, and asks you where you will sit, but in America, the head-waiter is a most magnificent potentate who lies in wait for you at the door, and bids you to follow him, sometimes in the following respectful manner beckoning, "There." (Laughter.) And you have got to do it, too. (Laughter.)

In America, in the tremendous hotels of the large cities, where you have to go to number 992 or something of the sort, I generally get a little entertainment out of the head-waiter. He is so thoroughly persuaded that it would never enter my head not to follow him. He will never look round to see if I am there. Why, he knows I'm there, but I'm not. (Laughter.) I wait my time, and when he has got to the

end I am sitting down waiting for a chance to be left alone. He says: "You cannot sit here." I say: "Why not? What is the matter with this seat?" He says: "You must not sit there." I say: "I don't want a constitutional walk; don't bother, I'm all right."

Well, as I said, you go into the dining-room, you take your seat, and you watch the arrival of the couples, and you will know the position of men. In France Monsieur and Madame come in together abreast, as a rule, arm in arm. They look pleasant, smile, and talk to each other. They smile at each other, even though married. (Laughter.)

In England, in the same class of hotel, John Bull comes in first. He does not look happy. John Bull loves privacy. He does not like to be obliged to eat in the presence of lots of people who have not been introduced to him, and he thinks it very hard that he should not have the whole dining-room to himself. That man, though, mind you, in his own house undoubtedly the most hospitable, the most kind, the most considerate of hosts in the world, that man in the dining-room of a hotel always comes in with a frown. He does not like it, he grumbles, and mild and demure, with her hands hanging down, modestly follows Mrs. John Bull. (Laughter.)

But in America, behold the arrival of Mrs. Jonathan. (Laughter.) Behold her triumphant entry, pulling Jonathan behind! Well, I like my own country, but I cannot help thinking that the proper and right way is the French. (Applause.) Ladies, you know all our shortcomings. Our hearts are exposed ever since the rib which covered them was taken off. Yet we ask you kindly to allow us to go through life with you, like the French, arm in arm, in good friendship and camaraderie. (Applause.)

THE INSISTENT QUESTION [1]

M. C. Otto

For days and days together growing crowds of men and women tramped over hot, dusty roads, headed for a little gem of blue water set in a circle of many-colored hills in northern Palestine. The report had spread that a young man was passing through the coast towns of the Sea of Galilee, teaching about ultimate matters with unheard-of freshness. He was said to bring hope to the discouraged, health to the sick, uneasiness to the mighty. It was this young man they sought. And when they found him—perhaps on a hillside with a crowd gathered at his feet, or teaching from a boat at the edge of the sea to the multitude that would otherwise press too close; sometimes early in the morning in a secluded place of prayer, or again in the cool of evening, at his temporary abode, surrounded by those brought to him suffering from all manner of diseases—wherever it was, when they found him they surrendered one by one to his unique personality. There was something so engaging yet noble in his bearing, something so simple yet profound in his thought, something so poetic yet vital in his speech, something so sad yet healing in his smile that, presently, turning to one another, they whispered, "Never man spake like this man."

Which is by no means to say that they understood him. They were won by his personal charm and impressed by his exhibition of power, but they misunderstood his message and failed to catch his spirit. He announced a new era based upon the principle of human equality; they forthwith fell to wondering and then to disputing which of them should have the chief advantage from the revolution. He urged a change of heart as the first essential to the changed order; their minds perpetually revolved about a rearrangement of possessions. So it happened that one of his most impressive discourses was devoted to this issue. On a certain occasion when the throng pressed about him and when even those nearest to his thought, the men he had chosen to carry his message to the world, were in a wrangle as

[1] Reprinted from *Things and Ideals* by M. C. Otto, through the permission of Henry Holt and Company.

to the exact dignity each was to possess in the coming kingdom, he spoke his mind on the subject. From that discourse a searching question has come down to us. It is recorded in three of the four biographical sketches we have of his life, and, as we have been taught, it runs thus:

What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

Three years after coming to public notice (or perhaps it was only one year, as some think) the young leader was dead. Persons of influence had secured his arrest, and had aroused the populace against him. He got the sort of trial a social pioneer usually gets, was sentenced to death by a judge who confessed he could discover no guilt in him, was led out to the hill of execution, a curious throng crowding in train. His friends deserted him or were awed into silence. The more brutal or ignorant of the rabble jeered and mocked. There, on the central cross of three, black against the evening sky, his great spirit took flight. The crowd strolled back, gossiping, joking, jostling one another through the city gate. Night settled down, the stars came out, Jerusalem slept. And the young Galilean slept soundest of all. So quickly may even a significant life be snuffed out. Or seem to be snuffed out. For it is now clear enough that the challenge of that brief life has come down the centuries. We still ask, and with new insistence:

What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

DREAMS [1]

M. C. Otto

THREE college chums were sitting in the shadow of a great willow on the bank of a sleepy little canal in New Jersey. It was June. The leaves were in their freshest green, the air was deli-

[1] Reprinted from *The American Review*, by permission of the author.

cately sweet with the elusive fragrance of high spring, the hedges were vocal with thrushes and song sparrows and the marshes with redwings and bobolinks, while a transparent sky, deep cobalt in the zenith, paler blue toward the horizon, expanded the scene into the far distance. Sitting in the shadow of the willow, "Harry," "Frank," and "Wick," known as the "Triumvirate" because of their invariable alliance, were making a languid pretence at preparing for their coming finals. But they were seniors, and their wayward minds refused to be restrained to the immediate task. They wandered back over the happy adventure now so soon to end forever; they wandered out into the strenuous life so soon to begin; they reminisced, they gossiped, they planned. And out of their reminiscing, gossiping, and planning, out of the earth and sky, too, perhaps, a project took form. They would inaugurate and carry through a paleontological expedition into the West. They would discover and restore the fossil record of the animal life that had populated this continent before anything like a man had walked on the earth. To this they would devote their lives.

It will be a half-century next June since this bargain was struck. Today "Wick" and "Harry" are known the world round in the field to which that day they gave their lives. "Wick" is William Berryman Scott of Princeton University. The mass of fossil remains he has collected, described, and reconstructed, the books he has written, *A History of Land Mammals in the Western Hemisphere*, *The Theory of Evolution*, etc., the men he has trained and inspired to continue the work, are an impressive consummation of the dream which took shape on that sunny afternoon. And "Harry" is Henry Fairfield Osborn, head of the American Museum of Natural History, hunter of fossil animals in many climes. His captures would stock a museum. His books, *Men of the Old Stone Age*, *The Origin and Evolution of Life*, etc., would fill a library shelf. The titles alone of his articles and pamphlets would make a neat little volume. And "Frank," the third actor in the little drama, Francis Spier, Jr., who died only last March, likewise proved equal to giving material embodiment to the scheme. Although through force of circumstances later obliged to abandon paleontology for law, he was an essential factor in putting through the first western expedition and was an active member of three others.

Many of the choicest specimens in the Princeton Museum are credited to his remarkable skill, and a large number of his discoveries are of the types of new genera and species. In each case an undergraduate dream took on real and magnificent shape as time nibbled away the years.

Such episodes would seem to show that the term experience includes more than the term matter. For if dreams (in the sense here used) are prophetic of conduct; if they command men's lives and direct their activities to remote and comprehensive ends, they must be included in the category of real being. In which case materialism leaves rather much to be said. That they have this power is secret to no one. They have it in various forms, each convincing in its own way, but all showing that the nature of reality must be conceived as rich enough to include ideals.

Dreams are not respecters of times or places. We began on the bank of a little canal in New Jersey, we may end on a great river in South America. Two men were swinging in their hammocks on the deck of a steamer throbbing its way up the moonlit Amazon, guarded by purple-black forests on either side. One of them was a professor, the other his pupil, and the hour was midnight. "James," whispered the professor, "are you asleep?" James was not asleep. "Well, I cannot sleep," continued the professor. "I am too happy. I keep thinking of our glorious plans." The professor was Louis Agassiz, the pupil, William James, and what a record of dreams achieved each left behind him! And how ideal a relationship between teacher and pupil, between age and youth—comradeship in the achievement of glorious plans!

"What are the differences," asks Bruce Bliven, writing of LaFollette, one of the greatest of those who dreamed of regenerating life through the medium of political action, "what are the differences in their fundamental stuff which cause one man, confronted by a great wrong, to smile the plump smile of contented indifference and pass by on the other side, while another turns white with rage and vows 'that if he ever has a chance to hit that thing he'll hit it hard'?" And he answers: "The student of behavior tells us that these differences go deep into personality, far below the realm of conscious intellectual actions; that probably most of us even before adolescence have been

marked to spend our lives on one side of the fence or the other." Idealism is thus in one respect a problem in eugenics. Great dreams are brain-born, James would have called them, but they are not accidents which might happen to any nervous equipment whatever. This lesson we are slowly learning, though we are far from knowing how to proceed to secure a more aspiring stock of human beings. But in another respect the problem is one of nurture, of education in and out of school. At present the infant mortality of dreams is very high and most of those that live are sickly. We are at once brutally indifferent and sentimentally indulgent toward the idealistic ardor of youth. We need conditions more favorable for robust dreams. We need a wider vogue for realistic idealism.

A wider vogue for realistic idealism. Material things condition us on all sides, yet we all choose to some extent what sort of things shall play the chief rôle in our lives. Therefore, hope lies neither in the detachment of indifference, nor the detachment of escape, but in the resolute, intelligent development of nature's and human nature's fairer possibilities. What these possibilities are cannot be determined without trial. It is one of those cases where "faith in a fact can help to create the fact." We live in a time that challenges idealism as it has perhaps never been challenged before. We can accept the challenge with confidence if we may count upon trained minds and dedicated purposes. We can do great things—there is no doubt about it—great things, individually and socially, if we engage life armed to battle with realities, lured by the banners that are dreams.

THE LOVE OF LIVING[1]

Robert Louis Stevenson

INDEED, it is a memorable subject for consideration, with what unconcern and gaiety mankind pricks on along the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The whole way is one wilderness of snares, and the

[1] *Æs Triplex*, reprinted through the permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

end of it, for those who fear the last pinch, is irrevocable ruin. And yet we go spinning through it all, like a party for the Derby. Perhaps the reader remembers one of the humorous devices of the deified Caligula: how he encouraged a vast concourse of holiday-makers on to his bridge over Baiæ bay; and when they were in the height of their enjoyment, turned loose the Prætorian guards among the company, and had them tossed into the sea. This is no bad miniature of the dealings of nature with the transitory race of man. Only, what a checkered picnic we have of it, even while it lasts! and into what great waters, not to be crossed by any swimmer, God's pale Prætorian throws us over in the end!

We live the time that a match flickers; we pop the cork of a ginger-beer bottle, and the earthquake swallows us on the instant. Is it not odd, is it not incongruous, is it not, in the highest sense of human speech, incredible, that we should think so highly of the ginger-beer, and regard so little the devouring earthquake? The love of Life and the fear of Death are two famous phrases that grow harder to understand the more we think about them. It is a well-known fact that an immense proportion of boat accidents would never happen if people held the sheet in their hands instead of making it fast; and yet, unless it be some martinet of a professional mariner or some landsman with shattered nerves, every one of God's creatures makes it fast. A strange instance of man's unconcern and brazen boldness in the face of death!

We confound ourselves with metaphysical phrases, which we import into daily talk with noble inappropriateness. We have no idea of what death is, apart from its circumstances and some of its consequences to others; and although we have some experience of living, there is not a man on earth who has flown so high into abstraction as to have any practical guess at the meaning of the word *life*. All literature, from Job and Omar Khayyám to Thomas Carlyle or Walt Whitman, is but an attempt to look upon the human state with such largeness of view as shall enable us to rise from the consideration of living to the Definition of Life. And our sages give us about the best satisfaction in their power when they say that it is a vapor, or a show, or made of the same stuff with dreams. Philosophy, in its more rigid sense, has been at the same work for ages; and after a myriad bald

heads have wagged over the problem, and piles of words have been heaped one upon another into dry and cloudy volumes without end, philosophy has the honor of laying before us, with modest pride, her contribution toward the subject: that life is a Permanent Possibility of Sensation. Truly a fine result! A man may very well love beef, or hunting, or a woman; but surely, surely, not a Permanent Possibility of Sensation! He may be afraid of a precipice, or a dentist, or a large enemy with a club, or even an undertaker's man; but not certainly of abstract death. We may trick with the word life in its dozen senses until we are weary of tricking; we may argue in terms of all the philosophies on earth, but one fact remains true throughout —that we do not love life, in the sense that we are greatly preoccupied about its conservation—that we do not, properly speaking, love life at all; but living. Into the views of the least careful there will enter some degree of providence; no man's eyes are fixed entirely on the passing hour; but although we have some anticipation of good health, good weather, wine, active employment, love, and self-approval, the sum of these anticipations does not amount to anything like a general view of life's possibilities and issues; nor are those who cherish them most vividly, at all the most scrupulous of their personal safety. To be deeply interested in the accidents of our existence, to enjoy keenly the mixed texture of human experience, rather leads a man to disregard precautions, and risk his neck against a straw. For surely the love of living is stronger in an Alpine climber roping over a peril, or a hunter riding merrily at a stiff fence, than in a creature who lives upon a diet and walks a measured distance in the interest of his constitution.

There is a great deal of very vile nonsense talked upon both sides of the matter: tearing divines reducing life to the dimensions of a mere funeral procession, so short as to be hardly decent; and melancholy unbelievers yearning for the tomb as if it were a world too far away. Both sides must feel a little ashamed of their performances now and again when they draw in their chairs to dinner. Indeed, a good meal and a bottle of wine is an answer to most standard works upon the question. When a man's heart warms to his viands, he forgets a great deal of sophistry, and soars into a rosy zone of contemplation. Death may be knocking at the door, like the Commander's statue; we have something else in hand, thank God, and let him

knock. Passing bells are ringing all the world over. All the world over, and every hour, some one is parting company with all his aches and ecstasies. For us also the trap is laid. But we are so fond of life that we have no leisure to entertain the terror of death. It is a honeymoon with us all through, and none of the longest. Small blame to us if we give our whole hearts to this glowing bride of ours, to the appetites, to honor, to the hungry curiosity of the mind, to the pleasure of the eyes in nature, and the pride of our own nimble bodies.

THE QUALITIES THAT WIN [1]

Charles Sumner

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

THROUGHOUT all time, from the dawn of history, men have swarmed to found new homes in distant lands. The Tyrians, skirting Northern Africa, stopped at Carthage; Carthaginians dotted Spain and even the distant coasts of Britain and Ireland; Greeks gemmed Italy and Sicily with art-loving settlements; Rome carried multitudinous colonies with her conquering eagles. Saxons, Danes, and Normans violently mingled with the original Britons. And in more modern times, Venice, Genoa, Portugal, Spain, France, and England, all sent forth emigrants to people foreign shores. But in these various expeditions, trade or war was the impelling motive. Too often commerce and conquest moved hand in hand, and the colony was incarnadined with blood.

On the day we celebrate, the sun for the first time in his course looked down upon a different scene, begun and continued under a different inspiration. A few conscientious Englishmen, in obedience to the monitor within, and that they might be free to worship God according to their own sense of duty, set sail for the unknown wilds of the North American continent. After a voyage of sixty-four days

[1] Reprinted from *Modern Eloquence*, Vol. III, by courtesy of the editor.

in the ship *Mayflower*, with Liberty at the prow and Conscience at the helm, they sighted the white sandbanks of Cape Cod, and soon thereafter in the small cabin framed that brief compact, forever memorable, which is the first written constitution of government in human history, and the very cornerstone of the American Republic; and then these Pilgrims landed.

This compact was not only foremost in time, it was also august in character, and worthy of perpetual example. Never before had the object of the "civil body public" been announced as "to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices from time to time as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony." How lofty! how true! Undoubtedly, these were the grandest words of government with the largest promise of any at that time uttered.

Our Pilgrims were few and poor. The whole outfit of this historic voyage, including £1,700 of trading stock, was only £2,400, and how little was required for their succor appears in the experience of the soldier Captain Miles Standish, who, being sent to England for assistance—not military, but financial—(God save the mark!) succeeded in borrowing—how much do you suppose?—£150 sterling. Something in the way of help; and as the historian adds, "though at fifty per cent. interest." So much for a valiant soldier on a financial expedition. A later agent, Allerton, was able to borrow for the colony £200 at a reduced interest of thirty per cent. Plainly, the money-sharks of our day may trace an undoubted pedigree to these London merchants. But I know not if any son of New England, oppressed by exorbitant interest, will be consoled by the thought that the Pilgrims paid the same.

And yet this small people—so obscure and outcast in condition—so slender in numbers and in means—so entirely unknown to the proud and great—so absolutely without name in contemporary records—whose departure from the Old World took little more than the breath of their bodies—are now illustrious beyond the lot of men; and the *Mayflower* is immortal beyond the Grecian Argo, or the stately ship of any victorious admiral. Though this was little foreseen in their day, it is plain now how it has come to pass. The highest greatness surviving time and storm is that which proceeds from the

soul of man. Monarchs and cabinets, generals and admirals, with the pomp of courts and the circumstances of war, in the gradual lapse of time disappear from sight; but the pioneers of truth, though poor and lowly, especially those whose example elevates human nature and teaches the rights of man, so that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth, such harbingers can never be forgotten, and their renown spreads coextensive with the cause they served.

I know not if any whom I now have the honor of addressing have thought to recall the great in rank and power filling the gaze of the world as the *Mayflower* with her company fared forth on their adventurous voyage. The foolish James was yet on the English throne, glorying that he had "peppered the Puritans." The morose Louis XIII, through whom Richelieu ruled, was King of France. The imbecile Philip III swayed Spain and the Indies. The persecuting Ferdinand the Second, tormentor of Protestants, was Emperor of Germany. Paul V, of the House of Borghese, was Pope of Rome. In the same princely company and all contemporaries were Christian IV, King of Denmark, and his son Christian, Prince of Norway; Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden; Sigismund the Third, King of Poland; Frederick, King of Bohemia, with his wife, the unhappy Elizabeth of England, progenitor of the house of Hanover; George William, Margrave of Brandenburg, and ancestor of the Prussian house that has given an emperor to Germany; Maximilian, Duke of Bavaria; Maurice, Landgrave of Hesse; Christian, Duke of Brunswick and Lunenburg; John Frederick, Duke of Wurtemberg and Teck; John, Count of Nassau; Henry, Duke of Lorraine; Isabella, Infanta of Spain and ruler of the Low Countries; Maurice, fourth Prince of Orange; Charles Emanuel, Duke of Savoy and ancestor of the King of United Italy; Cosimo de' Medici, third, Grand Duke of Florence; Antonio Priuli, ninety-third Doge of Venice, just after the terrible tragedy commemorated on the English stage as "Venice Preserved"; Bethlehem Gabor, Prince of Unitarian Transylvania, and elected King of Hungary, with the countenance of an African; and the Sultan Mustapha, of Constantinople, twentieth ruler of the Turks.

Who in the imposing troop of worldly grandeur is now remembered but with indifference or contempt? If I except Gustavus

Adolphus, it is because he revealed a superior character. Confront the *Mayflower* and the Pilgrims with the potentates who occupied such space in the world. The former are ascending into the firmament, there to shine forever, while the latter have been long dropping into the darkness of oblivion, to be brought forth only to point a moral or illustrate the fame of contemporaries whom they regarded not. Do I err in supposing this an illustration of the supremacy which belongs to the triumphs of the moral nature? At first impeded or postponed, they at last prevail. Theirs is a brightness which, breaking through all clouds, will shine forth with ever-increasing splendor. . . .

I would if I could make their example a universal lesson, and stamp it upon the land. The conscience which directed them should be the guide for our public councils. The just and equal laws which they required should be ordained by us, and the hospitality to truth which was their rule should be ours. Nor would I forget their courage and steadfastness. Had they turned back or wavered, I know not what would have been the record of this continent, but I see clearly that a great example would have been lost. Had Columbus yielded to his mutinous crew and returned to Spain without his great discovery; had Washington shrunk away disheartened by British power and the snows of New Jersey, these great instances would have been wanting for the encouragement of men. But our Pilgrims belong to the same heroic company, and their example is not less precious.

Only a short time after the landing on Plymouth Rock, the great republican poet, John Milton, wrote his "Comus," so wonderful for beauty and truth. His nature was more refined than that of the Pilgrims, and yet it requires little effort of imagination to catch from one of them, or at least from their beloved pastor, the exquisite, almost angelic words at the close—

> Mortals, who would follow me,
> Love Virtue; she alone is free;
> She can teach ye how to climb
> Higher than the sphery chime.
> Or if Virtue feeble were,
> Heaven itself would stoop to her.

(At the conclusion of Senator Sumner's speech the audience arose and gave cheer upon cheer.)

BEHOLD THE AMERICAN [1]

Thomas Dewitt Talmage

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

LET us remember that the coming American is to be an admixture of all foreign bloods. In about twenty-five or fifty years the model American will step forth. He will have the strong brain of the German, the polished manners of the French, the artistic taste of the Italian, the stanch heart of the English, the steadfast piety of the Scotch, the lightning wit of the Irish, and when he steps forth, bone, muscle, nerve, brain entwined with the fibers of all nationalities, the nations will break out in the cry: 'Behold the American!'

"Columbus discovered only the shell of this country. Agassiz came and discovered fossiliferous America. Silliman came and discovered geological America. Audubon came and discovered bird America. Longfellow came and discovered poetic America; and there are a half-dozen other Americas yet to be discovered.

"I never realized what this country was and is as on the day when at the close of the War our armies came back and marched in review before the President's stand at Washington. I do not care whether a man was a Republican or a Democrat, a Northern man or a Southern man, if he had any emotion of nature, he could not look upon it without weeping. God knew that the day was stupendous, and He cleared the heaven of cloud and mist and chill, and sprung the blue sky as the triumphal arch for the returning warriors to pass under. From Arlington Heights the spring foliage shook out its welcome, as the hosts came over the hills, and the sparkling waters of the Potomac tossed their gold to the feet of the battalions as they came to the Long Bridge and in almost interminable line passed over. The Capitol never seemed so majestic as that morning: snowy white, looking down upon the tides of men that came surging down, billow after billow. Passing in silence, yet I heard in every step the thunder of conflicts through which they had waded, and seemed to see drip-

[1] Reprinted from *Modern Eloquence*, Vol. III, by courtesy of the editor.

ping from their smoke-blackened flags the blood of our country's martyrs. For the best part of two days we stood and watched the filing on of what seemed endless battalions, brigade after brigade, division after division, host after host, rank beyond rank; ever moving, ever passing; marching, marching; tramp, tramp, tramp—thousands after thousands, battery front, arms shouldered, columns solid, shoulder to shoulder, wheel to wheel, charger to charger, nostril to nostril.

"Commanders on horses with their manes entwined with roses, and necks enchained with garlands, fractious at the shouts that ran along the line, increasing from the clapping of children clothed in white, standing on the steps of the Capitol, to the tumultuous vociferation of hundreds of thousands of enraptured multitudes, crying 'Huzza! Huzza!' Gleaming muskets, thundering parks of artillery, rumbling pontoon wagons, ambulances from whose wheels seemed to sound out the groans of the crushed and the dying that they had carried. These men came from balmy Minnesota, those from Illinois prairies. These were often hummed to sleep by the pines of Oregon, those were New England lumbermen. Those came out of the coal-shafts of Pennsylvania. Side by side in one great cause, consecrated through fire and storm and darkness, brothers in peril, on their way home from Chancellorsville and Kenesaw Mountain and Fredericksburg, in lines that seemed infinite they passed on.

"We gazed and wept and wondered, lifting up our heads to see if the end had come, but no! Looking from one end of that long avenue to the other, we saw them yet in solid column, battery front, host beyond host, wheel to wheel, charger to charger, nostril to nostril, coming as it were from under the Capitol. Forward! Forward! Their bayonets, caught in the sun, glimmered and flashed and blazed, till they seemed like one long river of silver, ever and anon changed into a river of fire. No end to the procession, no rest for the eyes. We turned our heads from the scene, unable longer to look. We felt disposed to stop our ears, but still we heard it, marching, marching; tramp, tramp, tramp. But hush,—uncover every head! Here they pass, the remnant of ten men of a full regiment. Silence! Widowhood and orphanage look on and wring their hands. But wheel into line, all ye people! North, South, East, West—all decades, all centuries, all millenniums! Forward, the whole line! Huzza! Huzza! (Great applause.)"

MAN'S INEVITABLE DUTY[1]

Daniel Webster

GENTLEMEN, your whole concern should be to do your duty, and leave consequences to take care of themselves. You will receive the law from the court. Your verdict, it is true, may endanger the prisoner's life, but then it is to save other lives. If the prisoner's guilt has been shown and proved beyond all reasonable doubt, you will convict him. If such reasonable doubts of guilt still remain, you will acquit him. You are the judges of the whole case. You owe a duty to the public, as well as to the prisoner at the bar. You cannot presume to be wiser than the law. Your duty is a plain, straightforward one. Doubtless we would all judge him in mercy. Towards him, as an individual, the law inculcates no hostility; but towards him, if proved to be a murderer, the law, and the oaths you have taken, and public justice demand that you do your duty. With consciences satisfied with the discharge of duty, no consequences can harm you. There is no evil that we cannot either face or fly from but the consciousness of duty disregarded. A sense of duty pursues us ever. It is omnipresent, like the Deity. If we take to ourselves the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, duty performed or duty violated is still with us, for our happiness or our misery. If we say the darkness shall cover us, in the darkness, as in the light, our obligations are yet with us. We cannot escape their power, nor fly from their presence. They are with us in this life, will be with us at its close; and in that scene of inconceivable solemnity, which lies yet farther onward, we shall still find ourselves surrounded by the consciousness of duty, to pain us wherever it has been violated, and to console us so far as God may have given us grace to perform it.

[1] Peroration of the prosecution in the Knapp-White murder case.

III

Essays in Conversational Mood

1. Essays in Animated Discourse

TASTE IN ORAL READING [1]

Hiram Corson

READING, I have said, is not acting. It is the acting which usually accompanies the reading or recitation of the professional elocutionist which cultivated people especially dislike. When they wish to see acting, they prefer going to a theatre. When they listen to reading, they want serious interpretative vocalization; only that and nothing more is necessary, unless it be a spontaneous and graceful movement of the hands, occasionally, such as one makes in animated conversation.

Again, the most elegant way of vocally interpreting a poem, is to read it from a book, rather than to recite it. Recitation has much to do with this acting business. In fact, elocutionists recite in order to have their arms free to act—to illustrate the thought they are expressing. Thought should not be helped out by gesture. Gesture results, or should result, from emotion, and should, therefore, be indefinite. Mimetic gesture, or mimetic action of any kind, is rarely, if ever, in place. If a speaker, addressing a *very* ignorant audience, had to use the word "rotatory," for example, he might make a cyclic movement or two with his hand, to illustrate its meaning. But to do so before an audience presumably intelligent enough to know the meaning of the word, would be impertinent—a "wasteful and ridiculous excess." So, too, it would be, to illustrate the word "somersault," before an audience of ordinary intelligence. The absurdity of mimetic action is well illustrated in the following: "I have heard," says a writer in *Expression* (Vol. I, No. 2), published in Boston, "of a pop-

[1] Reprinted from *The Voice and Spiritual Education*, by Hiram Corson, by permission of The Macmillan Company.

ular public reader of Boston giving last season Wordsworth's 'Daffodils'; and as she came to the last two lines,—

> And then my heart with pleasure fills,
> And dances with the daffodils,

she put her hand to her heart and with pleasure indicated by a sentimental flash of the eye upon the audience, danced a few graceful steps expressive of exuberant joy, and bowed herself off the platform amid the vociferous applause of the audience. The reader's taste in this case was no worse than that of the audience that applauded her. The incident shows how great the general lack of taste, and the need of the systematic study of fitness in the relation of thought to its expression."

I would say rather than "lack of taste," lack of spiritual life, although the former is closely allied with the latter. A reader who has assimilated the "Daffodils," who can sympathetically reproduce within himself the heart-dance of the poet, can better reveal that reproduction through the voice (the requisite vocal culture being assumed) than through such mimetic foolery as the above. He would not and could not condescend to the latter, if he had feeling deep enough truly to know the poem of the "Daffodils." True feeling is always serious, even if it be that of deep joy. The trouble with many public readers is, that they don't truly know, have not inwardly experienced, what they attempt to interpret vocally; and, as a consequence, they resort to what disgusts people of real culture.

WORDS THAT LAUGH AND CRY [1]

Charles Anderson Dana

Did it ever strike you that there was anything queer about the capacity of written words to absorb and convey feelings! Taken separately, they are mere symbols with no more feeling to

[1] Reprinted by permission of *The New York Sun*.

them than so many bricks, but string them along in a row under certain mysterious conditions and you find yourself laughing or crying as your eye runs over them. That words should convey mere ideas is not so remarkable. "The boy is fat," "the cat has nine tails," are statements that seem obviously enough within the power of written language. But it is different with feelings. They are no more visible in the symbols that hold them than electricity is visible on the wire; and yet there they are, always ready to respond when the right test is applied by the right person. That spoken words, charged with human tones and lighted by human eyes, should carry feelings, is not so astonishing. The magnetic sympathy of the orator one understands; he might affect his audience, possibly, if he spoke in a language they did not know. But written words: How can they do it! Suppose, for example, that you possess remarkable facility in grouping language, and that you have strong feelings upon some subject, which finally you determine to commit to paper. Your pen runs along, the words present themselves, or are dragged out, and fall into their places. You are a good deal moved; here you chuckle to yourself, and half a dozen of lines further down a lump comes into your throat, and perhaps you have to wipe your eyes. You finish, and the copy goes to the printer. When it gets into print a reader sees it. His eye runs along the lines and down the page until it comes to the places where you chuckled as you wrote; then he smiles, and six lines below he has to swallow several times and snuffle and wink to restrain an exhibition of weakness. And then some one else comes along who is not so good a word juggler as you are, or who has no feelings, and swaps the words about a little, and twists the sentences; and behold the spell is gone, and you have left a parcel of written language duly charged with facts, but without a single feeling.

No one can juggle with words with any degree of success without getting a vast respect for their independent ability. They will catch the best idea a man ever had as it flashes through his brain, and hold on to it, to surprise him with it long after, and make him wonder that he was ever man enough to have such an idea. And often they will catch an idea on its way from the brain to the pen point, turn, twist, and improve on it as the eye winks, and in an instant there they are, strung hand in hand across the page and grinning back at the writer: "This is our idea, old man; not yours!"

As for poetry, every word that expects to earn its salt in poetry should have a head and a pair of legs of its own, to go and find its place, carrying another word, if necessary, on its back. The most that should be expected of any competent poet in regular practice is to serve a general summons and notice of action on the language. If the words won't do the rest for him it indicates that he is out of sympathy with his tools.

But you don't find feelings in written words unless there were feelings in the man who used them. With all their apparent independence they seem to be little vessels that hold in some puzzling fashion exactly what is put into them. You can put tears into them, as though they were so many little buckets; and you can hang smiles along them, like Monday's clothes on the line, or you can starch them with facts and stand them up like a picket fence; but you won't get the tears out unless you first put them in. Art won't put them there. It is like the faculty of getting the quality of interest into pictures. If the quality exists in the artist's mind he is likely to find means to get it into his pictures, but if it isn't in the man no technical skill will supply it. So, if the feelings are in the writer and he knows his business, they will get into the words; but they must be in him first. It isn't the way the words are strung together that makes Lincoln's Gettysburg speech immortal, but the feelings that were in the man. But how do such little, plain words manage to keep their grip on such feelings? That is the miracle.

"THE MODERN PULPIT" [1]

G. Lowes Dickinson

It is a bright July morning. As I sit in the garden I look out, over a tangle of wild roses, to a calm sea and a flock of white sails. Everything invites to happy thought and innocent reverie. Moreover, it is the day of rest, and every one is at leisure to turn his mind

[1] Reprinted from *Appearances*, by permission of Doubleday, Doran and Company.

towards pleasant things. To what, in fact, are most people on this continent turning theirs? To this, the Sunday newspaper.

Let us analyze this production, peculiar to the New World. It comprises eight sections and eighty-eight pages, and very likely does really, as it boasts, contain "more reading matter than the whole Bible."

Opening Section 1, I read the following headings:

Baron Shot as Bank-teller—Ends Life with Bullet.

Two Fatally Hurt in Strike Riots at Pittsburg.

Steals a Look at Busy Burglars.

Drowned in Surf at Narragansett.

Four of a Family Fear a Dog's bite (*sic*).

Two are Dead, Two Dying; Fought over Cow.

Section 2 appears to be concerned with similar matter, for example:

Struck by Blast, Woman is Dying.

Hard Shell Crabs Help in Giving Burglar Alarm.

Man Who Has Been Married Three Times Denies the Existence of God.

But here I notice further the interesting and enigmatic heading:

Will "boost" not "knock" New York,

and roused for the first time to something like curiosity, read:

> To lock horns with the muckrakes and to defend New York against all who defame and censure it, the Association for New York was incorporated yesterday.

I notice also "Conferences agree to short rates on woolen goods," and am reminded of the shameless bargaining of which, for many weeks past, Washington has been the center; which leads me to reflect on the political advantages of a tariff and its wholesome effect on the national life.

Section 3 deals with Aviation and seaside resorts:

Brave Lake Placid [I read] Planning New Hotel.

Haines Falls Entertaining a Great Throng of People.

Resound with the Laughter and Shout of Summer Throngs.

Section 4 consists entirely of advertisements:

> Tuning-up sale. [I read.] Buff-and-crimson cards will mark the trail of all goods ready for the sale. We are tuning up. By September it is our intention to have assembled in these two great buildings the most fashionable merchandise ever shown. No one piece of goods will be permitted to linger that lacks, in any detail, the esthetic beauty demanded by New York women of fashion. Everything will be better and a definite percentage lower in price than New York will find in any other store. Do not expect a sale of ordinary proportions. Tomorrow you will find the store alive with enthusiasm. This is not a summer hurrah.

And so on, to the end of the page. Twelve pages of advertisements, uninterrupted by any item of news.

Section 5 is devoted to automobile gossip and automobile advertisements.

Thereupon follows the Special Sporting Section:

Rumson Freebooters defeat Devon's first.

"Young Corbett" is chipped in the 8th.

Doggett and Cubs each win shut out.

Brockett is easy for Detroit Nine.

Glancing at the small type I read:

> Englewood was the first to tally. This was in the fourth inning. W. Merritt, the first man up, was safe on Williams' error, and he got round to third on another miscue by Williams. Charley Clough was on deck with a timely single, which scored Merritt. Curran's out at first put Clough on third, from whence he tallied on Cuming's single. Cuming got to second, when Wiley grounded out along the first base line and scored on Reinmund's single. Every other time Reinmund came to the bat he struck out.

I pass to the Magazine Section.

On the first page is the mysterious heading "E. of K. and E." Several huge portraits of a bald, clean-shaven man in shirt sleeves partially explain. E. is Mr. Erlanger, a theatrical impresario, and K. and E. presumably are his firm. The article describes "the accomplishment of a busy man on one of his ordinary days," and makes one hope no day is ever extraordinary. The interviewer who tells about him is almost speechless with emotion. He searches for a phrase to express his feelings, finds it at last, and comes triumphantly to his close—Mr. Erlanger is a man "with trained arms, trained legs, a trained body, and a trained mind." There follows: "The Story of a Society Girl," in which we are told "there is a confession of love and the startling discovery that Dolly was a professional model"; "The Doctor's Story," with a picture of a corpse, "whose white, shapely hands were clasped one over the other"; and "Would you Convict on Circumstantial Evidence?—A Scaffold Confession. A True Story." I glance at this, and read, "While the crowd watched in strained, breathless silence there came a sharp, agonized voice and a commotion near the steps of the scaffold. 'Stop! Stop! The man is not guilty. I mean it. It is I who should stand there. Let me speak.' " You can now reconstruct the story for yourself. Next comes "Get the Man! Craft and courage of old-time and modern express-robbers matched by organized secret service and the mandate that makes capture alone the end of an unflagging man-hunt." This is accompanied by portraits of famous detectives and train-robbers.

There follows "Thrilling Lines," with a picture of a man who seems to be looping the loop on a bicycle.

And the conclusion of the section is a poem, entitled "Cynthianna Blythe," with colored illustrations apparently intended for children, and certainly successful in not appealing to adults.

Comment, I suppose, is superfluous. But it is only fair to say that the whole of the press of America is not of this character. Among the thousands of papers daily produced on that continent, it would be possible, I believe, to name ten—I myself could mention five—which contain in almost every issue some piece of information or comment which an intelligent man might care to peruse. There are to be found, now and again, passing references to European and even to Asiatic politics; for it cannot be said that the press of America

wholly ignored the recent revolutions in Persia and in Turkey. I myself saw a reference to the new Sultan as a man "fat, but not fleshy." England looms big enough on the American horizon to be treated to an occasional gibe; and the doings of fashionable Americans in London are reported somewhat fully. Still, on the whole, the American daily press is typified by the specimen I have analyzed. Sensations, personalities, and fiction are its stock-in-trade. Why? The causes are well known, but are worth recapitulating, for they are part of the system of modern civilization.

The newspaper press is a business intended to make money. This is its primary aim, which may, or may not, include the subordinate purpose of advocating some line of public policy. Now, to make money, it is essential to secure advertisements; and to secure advertisements it is essential to have a large circulation. But a large circulation can only be obtained by lowering the price of the paper and adapting it to the leisure mood of the mass of people. But this leisure mood is usually one of sheer vacuity, incapable of intellectual effort or imaginative response. The man is there, waiting to be filled, and to be filled with the stuff easiest to digest. The rest follows. The newspapers supply the demand, and by supplying extend and perpetuate it. Among the possible appeals open to them they deliberately choose the lowest. For people are capable of Good as well as of Bad; and if they cannot get the Bad they will sometimes take the Good. Newspapers, probably, could exist, even under democratic conditions, by maintaining a certain standard of intelligence and morals. But it is easier to exist on melodrama, fatuity, and sport. And one or two papers adopting that course force the others into line; for here, as in so many departments of modern life, "The Bad drives out the Good." This process of deterioration of the press is proceeding rapidly in England, with the advent of the halfpenny newspaper. It has not gone so far as in America, but there is no reason why it should not, and every reason why it should; for the same causes are at work.

I have called the process "deterioration," but that, of course, is matter of opinion. A Cabinet Minister, at a recent Conference in London, is reported to have congratulated the press on its progressive improvement during recent years. And Lord Northcliffe is a peer. The more the English press approximates to the American, the more,

it would seem, it may hope for public esteem and honor. And that is natural, for the American method pays.

Well, the sun still shines and the sky is still blue. But between it and the American people stretches a veil of printed paper. Curious! the fathers of this nation read nothing but the Bible. That, too, it may be said, was a veil; but a veil woven of apocalyptic visions, of lightning and storm, of Leviathan and the wrath of Jehovah. What is the stuff of the modern veil we have seen? And surely the contrast is calculated to evoke curious reflections.

NATURE'S COMPULSORY EDUCATION[1]

Thomas Henry Huxley

TO EVERY one of us the world was once as fresh and new as to Adam. And then, long before we were susceptible of any other mode of instruction, Nature took us in hand, and every minute of waking life brought its educational influence, shaping our actions into rough accordance with Nature's laws, so that we might not be ended untimely by too gross disobedience. Nor should I speak of this process of education as past, for any one, be he as old as he may. For every man the world is as fresh as it was at the first day, and as full of untold novelties for him who has the eyes to see them. And Nature is still continuing her patient education of us in that great university, the universe, of which we are all members—Nature having no Test-Acts.

Those who take honors in Nature's university, who learn the laws which govern men and things and obey them, are the really great and successful men in this world. The great mass of mankind are the "Poll," who pick up just enough to get through without much discredit. Those who won't learn at all are plucked; and then you can't come up again. Nature's pluck means extermination.

Thus the question of compulsory education is settled so far as Na-

[1] From *A Liberal Education and Where to Find It.*

ture is concerned. Her bill on that question was framed and passed long ago. But, like all compulsory legislation, that of Nature is harsh and wasteful in its operation. Ignorance is visited as sharply as wilful disobedience—incapacity meets with the same punishment as crime. Nature's discipline is not even a word and a blow, and the blow first; but the blow without the word. It is left to you to find out why your ears are boxed.

The object of what we commonly call education—that education in which man intervenes and which I shall distinguish as artificial education—is to make good these defects in Nature's methods; to prepare the child to receive Nature's education, neither incapably nor ignorantly, nor with wilful disobedience; and to understand the preliminary symptoms of her pleasure, without waiting for the box on the ear. In short, all artificial education ought to be an anticipation of natural education. And a liberal education is an artificial education, which has not only prepared a man to escape the great evils of disobedience to natural laws, but has trained him to appreciate and to seize upon the rewards which Nature scatters with as free a hand as her penalties.

That man, I think, has had a liberal education who has been so trained in youth that his body is the ready servant of his will, and does with ease and pleasure all the work that, as a mechanism, it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold, logic engine, with all its parts of equal strength, and in smooth working order; ready, like a steam engine, to be turned to any kind of work, and spin the gossamers as well as forge the anchors of the mind; whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the great and fundamental truths of Nature and of the laws of her operations; one who, no stunted ascetic, is full of life and fire, but whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience; who has learned to love all beauty, whether of Nature or of art, to hate all vileness, and to respect others as himself.

Such an one and no other, I conceive, has had a liberal education; for he is, as completely as a man can be, in harmony with Nature. He will make the best of her, and she of him. They will get on together rarely; she as his ever-beneficent mother; he as her mouthpiece, her conscious self, her minister and interpreter. . . .

LET THERE BE IVY [1]

Robert Littell

IN THE course of a thoughtful article in a recent *Spectator*, called Learning from America, Mr. Norman Angell tells a story which, to us at any rate, is new. He quotes from a certain American university publication, as follows:

There is a tradition in this university that only the faculty are allowed to walk on the gravel path across the campus. This tradition goes into effect next Monday.

Mr. Angell smiles at this, and we smile with him, and quite possibly the authors of the tradition were themselves amused. But there is in Mr. Angell's smile something which will not be found in the facial expressions of most of his English readers. We can see those faces, and the thought that we cannot at once reply to what we see written on them, and that if we did reply we should probably be misunderstood, is annoying. Temporarily obeying the eternal impulse to condemn unheard, unseen, we can say that the attitude of Mr. Angell's English readers is supercilious, faintly indignant, and also a little perfunctory. With their first amusement at being told that in this country traditions go into effect like time-tables, is mixed no small amount of "I told you so," which is one of the most delicious sensations in the world, and one of the most blinding. "Incredible," mutter the English at each new folly of ours; "incredible." But in their hearts they are not surprised; they knew all the time that we were just like that. We were raw, ridiculous, ridden with Ku Klux Klans, a prey to evolution trials; we offered a thousand opportunities for laughter, some of them rather novel, but of course the root of the trouble was that we were a country without tradition, a country without ivy, moral or intellectual. Therefore how unusually delightful and satisfying will appear this nugget from the Middle West, this naïve laying of the cornerstone for a tradition, this proof that most

[1] Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., from *Read America First*, copyright, 1926.

of our faults derive from lack of ivy, including the cardinal fault of believing that we can create our own ivy over-night.

If the little item about the gravel path had come to our notice through other channels, if we had found it, for instance, embedded in the "Americana" of the *Mercury*, we might have felt almost supercilious ourselves. "This tradition goes into effect on Monday"—it has a bumptious sound. But it has other sounds, too, as we think it over, and, observing that Mr. Angell's amusement rapidly passes into something else, and that he is forced to admire these creators of tradition, we find it easier to escape from our first self-mockery, to turn angrily upon that part of his audience overseas which will only snicker, and finally to defend the ivy manufacturers as gallant pioneers, violently carving their small clearing of culture from a traditionless forest.

The act of the college authorities who dedicated a gravel path for an eternal purpose, beginning Monday, was after all in one of the best of American traditions. Stripped to its simplest and crudest, this tradition amounts to a belief, handed on from pioneer father to Babbitt son, that nothing is impossible, or next-to-nothing. It is an absurd belief, but a valiant and necessary one, and its statistical incorrectness ought not to detract from its spiritual truth. And even to its material truth all America is an astounding witness. Looking at our growth, our vast material beehive, amazingly intricate and ingenious, of stone, metal, machinery, men, organization, only a rash man or a very wise one, would deny that "anything is possible in such a country." There is nothing built by man so large that he cannot build a larger one, nothing so smoothly working that he cannot add to its noiseless lubrication, nothing so small that he cannot shrink it still further out of sight. For a long while America was so occupied with her material self that the proud belief was perverted, and the will to do the unbelievable was sidetracked into mere record-breaking. Lately we have awakened from this drunkenness of power, and are a little ashamed of many of the things we were once proud of because they were held to be impossible.

We are beginning to long for other impossibles. Tradition, atmosphere, the echo of lost footfalls, ivy. We envy Europe keenly, and to assuage our humiliation we invade her yearly and bring back objects on which so many more generations of men have sat, from

which so many more generations of women have eaten, than have ever eaten off or sat upon anything of our own. But it is an unsatisfactory method, and the antiques, though we have acquired the greater part of them, are not numerous enough to create an atmosphere. Besides, we realize that an atmosphere is all the more valuable for being indigenous. One party would have us roll our own atmosphere from Indian tobacco, but we are too wise to be persuaded that the Indian is indigenous. Only we ourselves are indigenous, and the atmosphere must be all our own. We are shockingly poor in objects, in furniture, art, churches, ruins, and the accumulation of enough of them to constitute a really thick native atmosphere is a long job. But customs are another matter. We have newspapers, we know how to use propaganda, we have had recent experience in drives, and the technique of nation-wide selling campaigns is one of the things we do best. If people's purchasing habits can be changed, their social customs can be changed too—better than that, customs can be made to spring up where none grew before. We can pick out a few choice customs and call them traditions. After September 15 no male who wants to save it for next year dares wear a straw hat. Whether the motive is a sense of duty, or fear, or habit, it can be ennobled by calling it a tradition, and sooner or later people will forget how the custom began, which forgetfulness marks the promotion of a custom into a tradition. And as with trivial traditions, like the wearing of straw hats, so with great traditions like the dedication of particular gravel paths to the footsteps of learned men.

Tradition by act of will. . . . It sounds foolish, yet in many ways it is a splendid and Promethean gesture. Time and the gods reserve fire to themselves, man steals it, and one of his uses of it is the annihilation of time. Time has been cruel to us; we were born late, and are behind in the race measured by ivy on the walls. Is Time against us? Then let us annihilate Time.

Consider the stone wall, now a tradition, once an act of will. Look upon this field, these barren New England ribs, with their shivering young trees, boxed in by walls older than any tree. They do not belong to man now, but to the earth; they are no longer separate ribs. And yet not long ago the placing of each rock was an act of will. These walls seem inevitable now, but "only by effort is the inevitable accomplished." The men who placed the rocks sweated

blood for a living, and did not have time to say to themselves, as they might easily have said: "It is a tradition of New England to leave stone walls. We'll begin that wall right away. Lord knows when we'll finish it, but the tradition begins tomorrow. And just to make people know we were thinking of tradition, we'll plant a little ivy here and there."

And there was ivy.

LET THE TREATMENT FIT THE CRIMINAL[1]

A REVOLTING crime has been "expiated" on the gallows. If the death of a murderer can ever be a compensation for the death of his victim, the execution of young Hickman by the State of California for the fiendish murder of his employer's little daughter was a moderate price. The inconceivable callousness that permitted the murderer not only to strangle the girl but to deliver her mutilated body to her father in return for money exacted under the false pretense of restoring her alive is of the sort that arouses public rage. In a more primitive community it would have led to summary vengeance. The provision of counsel for defense, the orderly trial, and, after appeal to exhaust the resources of the law, the official execution constitute an improvement over appeasement of an outraged community by lynching. "Hickman was fairly tried," says the New York "World." "He was accorded every right that any citizen can claim. He is now dead. That tells the whole story and points the whole moral."

Does it? We do not think so.

Is that the best we can do with our Hickmans? Is that all that can be done to protect our Marion Parkers? Are the standards of society no higher than those of the underworld gang that avenges a killing by "bumping off" the killer? Do we imagine that we are dealing intelligently with crime when we put the criminal out of the way temporarily or permanently?

[1] Reprinted from *The Outlook and Independent* with the permission of the editors.

Hickman's fate has no effect in deterring others of his kind from similar crimes. While he was on his legal way to the gallows a young Japanese in Hawaii, excited by his example, committed a crime like his. All that Hickman's death insures is that he will himself never commit a crime again.

Twelve years ago it was proposed that every murderer, after being convicted in court, should be turned over to a special tribunal to determine what should be done with him. Governor Smith of New York has proposed that such a tribunal or sentencing board be created for dealing not only with murderers but with all convicted felons. Suppose such a sentencing board, composed of experts in medicine, psychiatry, law, sociology, and the like, had been invoked in Hickman's case. It would, in fact, have been invoked several years before the murder, and might well have averted the murder altogether, and Marion Parker might be alive today.

About a year and a half ago Hickman forged a check. He was tried in Los Angeles, proved guilty, and released on probation. In the meantime he spent several weeks in the county jail. On his release, he began committing a series of crimes, including theft, robbery, and at least one murder—ranging as far south as Texas, as far east as Washington, and as far north as Chicago—culminating in the murder in Los Angeles for which he was hanged. If, instead of being released under a probation officer Hickman had been committed by the court to the custody of a sentencing board, the first thing to be done would have been to examine his history. Then would have been discovered what now is known. His history is told in the "Survey" for October 1. His mother was feeble-minded and had been insane, and after release from the State hospital had frequently threatened the lives of her children and stood over them with butcher knife and hand ax. Several maternal relatives were mentally unstable or defective. His father, whom he hated, deserted the family. Both by heredity and environment he was fitted for the criminal schooling he presumably got in jail and for his brief but devastating criminal career. He was a great reader and was ambitious in school. Disappointments brought him chagrin and resentment. Human material of that sort is peculiarly beyond the understanding of ordinary prison officials and is likewise unfit for free society. A properly constituted sentencing board would have found this out and would have sent

young Hickman where, if remediable, he could have been cured, if irremediable, he could have been permanently retained under guardianship.

Instead of weakening our courts, such a sentencing board would strengthen them. It would concentrate upon the court in each case the authority and duty of determining guilt or innocence of the accused.

But it would free the jury from consideration of the consequences of its verdict, which now often leads jurymen to avoid a verdict of first degree murder; and, by minimizing the ill consequences of possible judicial prejudice, it would supply good reason for increasing the power of the judge to comment upon the facts as they were established and to clarify the minds of the jury.

Such a sentencing board involves several things. It involves freedom from political or other influence. It involves the substitution of institutions of mental and moral cure for such secret places of detention as our prisons. It involves, most of all, a radical change in the attitude of our people toward crime and the criminal—a change that means at least the subordinating of the spirit of retribution to an insistence upon intelligent protection of society and a real desire for the cure of those who by nature or circumstance are twisted and warped from the normal.

Not all criminals are Hickmans by any means. Many of them are simply normal human beings who have been virtually educated into enmity to society. Many of them are potentially good citizens. But we treat them, with few exceptions, as if they were all alike. We assume that the administration of the law is a sort of game, of which the participants are supposed to know the rules; that each infraction of the rules has a penalty, which, when paid, lets the offender off free; that judges are referees to interpret the rules, and that juries are umpires to decide when they have been broken.

No wonder we have developed an underworld skilled in breaking the rules and generally willing to take a sporting chance of discovery and punishment.

We shall never deal intelligently with crime till we recognize it as a disease of society to be diagnosed and treated—cured whenever cure is possible and, whenever cure is impossible, then isolated; and

we shall never deal with the criminal intelligently until we stop making the punishment fit the crime and begin making the treatment fit the criminal.

MAN'S ESSENTIAL NOBILITY [1]

Robert Louis Stevenson

WHAT a monstrous spectre is this man, the disease of the agglutinated dust, lifting alternate feet or lying drugged with slumber; killing, feeding, growing, bringing forth small copies of himself; grown upon with hair like grass, fitted with eyes that move and glitter in his face; a thing to set children screaming;—and yet looked at nearlier, known as his fellows know him, how surprising are his attributes! Poor soul, here for so little, cast among so many hardships, filled with desires so incommensurate and so inconsistent, savagely surrounded, savagely descended, irremediably condemned to prey upon his fellow lives: who should have blamed him had he been of a piece with his destiny and a being merely barbarous? And we look and behold him instead filled with imperfect virtues: infinitely childish, often admirably valiant, often touchingly kind; sitting down, amidst his momentary life, to debate of right and wrong and the attributes of the deity; rising up to do battle for an egg or die for an idea; singling out his friends and his mate with cordial affection; bringing forth in pain, rearing with long-suffering solicitude, his young. To touch the heart of his mystery, we find in him one thought, strange to the point of lunacy: the thought of duty; the thought of something owing to himself, to his neighbour, to his God: an ideal of decency, to which he would rise if it were possible; a limit of shame, below which, if it be possible, he will not stoop. The design in most men is one of conformity; here and there, in picked natures, it transcends itself and soars on the other side, arming martyrs with independence; but in all, in their

[1] From *Pulvis Et Umbra*, reprinted with the permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

degrees, it is a bosom thought:—Not in man alone, for we trace it in dogs and cats whom we know fairly well, and doubtless some similar point of honour sways the elephant, the oyster, and the louse, of whom we know so little:—But in man, at least, it sways with so complete an empire that merely selfish things come second, even with the selfish: that appetites are starved, fears are conquered, pains supported; that almost the dullest shrinks from the reproof of a glance, although it were a child's; and all but the most cowardly stand amid the risks of war; and the more noble, having strongly conceived an act as due to their ideal, affront and embrace death. Strange enough if, with their singular origin and perverted practice, they think they are to be rewarded in some future life: stranger still, if they are persuaded of the contrary, and think this blow, which they solicit, will strike them senseless for eternity. I shall be reminded what a tragedy of misconception and misconduct man at large presents: of organised injustice, cowardly violence and treacherous crime; and of the damning imperfections of the best. They cannot be too darkly drawn. Man is indeed marked for failure in his efforts to do right. But where the best consistently miscarry, how tenfold more remarkable that all should continue to strive; and surely we should find it both touching and inspiriting, that in a field from which success is banished, our race should not cease to labour.

If the first view of this creature, stalking in his rotatory isle, be a thing to shake the courage of the stoutest, on this nearer sight, he startles us with an admiring wonder. It matters not where we look, under what climate we observe him, in what stage of society, in what depth of ignorance, burthened with what erroneous morality; by camp-fires in Assiniboia, the snow powdering his shoulders, the wind plucking his blanket, as he sits, passing the ceremonial calumet and uttering his grave opinions like a Roman senator; in ships at sea, a man inured to hardship and vile pleasures, his brightest hope a fiddle in a tavern and a bedizened trull who sells herself to rob him, and he for all that simple, innocent, cheerful, kindly like a child, constant to toil, brave to drown, for others; in the slums of cities, moving among indifferent millions to mechanical employments, without hope of change in the future, with scarce a pleasure in the present, and yet true to his virtues, honest up to his lights, kind to his neighbours, tempted perhaps in vain by the bright gin-palace, perhaps

long-suffering with the drunken wife that ruins him; in India (a woman this time) kneeling with broken cries and streaming tears, as she drowns her child in the sacred river; in the brothel, the discard of society, living mainly on strong drink, fed with affronts, a fool, a thief, the comrade of thieves, and even here keeping the point of honour and the touch of pity, often repaying the world's scorn with service, often standing firm upon a scruple, and at a certain cost, rejecting riches:—everywhere some virtue cherished or affected, everywhere some decency of thought and carriage, everywhere the ensign of man's ineffectual goodness:—ah! if I could show you this! if I could show you these men and women, all the world over, in every stage of history, under every abuse of error, under every circumstance of failure, without hope, without help, without thanks, still obscuredly fighting the lost fight of virtue, still clinging, in the brothel or on the scaffold, to some rag of honour, the poor jewel of their souls! They may seek to escape, and yet they cannot; it is not alone their privilege and glory, but their doom; they are condemned to some nobility; all their lives long, the desire of good is at their heels, the implacable hunter.

2. *Essays in Humorous Mood*

THE FABLE OF THE TWO MANDOLIN PLAYERS AND THE WILLING PERFORMER [1]

George Ade

A VERY attractive Debutante knew two Young Men who called on her every Thursday Evening, and brought their Mandolins along. They would double over and tickle the Instruments nearly to Death and then she would say that she loved Music.

One was named Fred and the other was Eustace.

The Mothers of the Neighborhood often remarked, "What Perfect Manners Fred and Eustace have!" It may be added, on the Side, that Fred and Eustace were more popular with the Mothers than they were with the Younger Set, although no one could say a Word against either of them. Only it was rumored in Keen Society that they didn't Belong. The Fact that they went Calling in a Crowd, and took their Mandolins along, may give the Acute Reader some idea of the Life that Fred and Eustace held out to the Young Women of their Acquaintance.

The Debutante's name was Myrtle. Her Parents were very Watchful, and did not encourage her to receive Callers, except such as were known to be Exemplary Young Men. Fred and Eustace were a few of those who escaped the Black List. Myrtle always appeared to be glad to see them, and they regarded her as a Terrible Swell Girl.

Fred's Cousin came from St. Paul on a Visit; and one Day, in the Street, he saw Myrtle, and noticed that Fred tipped his Hat, and gave her a Stage Smile.

"Oh, Queen of Sheba!" exclaimed the Cousin from St. Paul, whose name was Gus, as he stood stock still and watched her Shepherd's

[1] Reprinted from *The Girl Proposition*, by permission of Harper & Brothers.

Plaid disappear around a Corner. "She's a Bird. Do you know her well?"

"I know her Quite Well," replied Fred, coldly. "She is a Charming Girl."

"She is all of that. You're a great Describer. And now what Night are you going to take me around to Call on her?"

Fred very naturally Hemmed and Hawed. It must be remembered that Myrtle was a member of an Excellent Family, and had been schooled in the Proprieties, and it was not to be supposed that she would crave the Society of slangy old Gus, who had an Abounding Nerve, and furthermore was as Fresh as the Mountain Air.

He was the Kind of Fellow who would see a Girl twice, and then, upon meeting her the Third Time, he would go up and straighten her Cravat for her, and call her by her First Name.

Put him into a Strange Company—*en route* to a Picnic—and by the time the Baskets were unpacked he would have a Blonde all to himself, and she would have traded her Fan for his College Pin.

If a Fair-Looker on the Street happened to glance at him Hard he would run up and seize her by the Hand, and convince her that they had Met. And he always Got Away with it, too.

In a Department Store, while waiting for the Cash Boy to come back with the Change, he would find out the Girl's Name, her Favorite Flower, and where a Letter would reach her.

Upon entering a Parlor Car at St. Paul, he would select a Chair next to the Most Promising One in Sight, and ask her if she cared to have the Shade lowered.

Before the Train cleared the Yards he would have the Porter bringing a Foot Stool for the Lady.

At Hastings he would be asking her if she wanted Something to Read.

At Red Wing he would be telling her that she resembled Maxine Elliott, and showing her his Watch, left to him by his Grandfather, a Prominent Virginian.

At La Crosse he would be reading the Menu Card to her, and telling her how different it is when you have Some One to join you in a Bite.

At Milwaukee he would go out and buy a Bouquet for her, and when they rode into Chicago they would be looking out of the same

Window, and he would be arranging for her Baggage with the Transfer Man. After that they would be Old Friends.

Now Fred and Eustace had been at School with Gus, and they had seen his Work, and they were not disposed to Introduce him into One of the most Exclusive Homes in the City.

They had known Myrtle for many Years; but they did not dare to Address her by her First Name, and they were Positive that if Gus attempted any of his usual Tactics with her she would be Offended; and, naturally enough, they would be Blamed for bringing him to the House.

But Gus insisted. He said he had seen Myrtle, and she Suited him from the Ground up, and he proposed to have Friendly Doings with her. At last they told him they would take him if he promised to Behave. Fred warned him that Myrtle would frown down any Attempt to be Familiar on Short Acquaintance, and Eustace said that as long as he had known Myrtle he had never Presumed to be Free and Forward with her. He had simply played the Mandolin. That was as Far Along as he had ever got.

Gus told them not to Worry about him. All he asked was a Start. He said he was a Willing Performer, but as yet he had never been Disqualified for Crowding. Fred and Eustace took this to mean that he would not Overplay his Attentions, so they escorted him to the House.

As soon as he had been Presented, Gus showed her where to sit on the Sofa, then he placed himself about Six Inches away and began to Buzz, looking her straight in the Eye. He said that when he first saw her he mistook her for Miss Prentice, who was said to be the Most Beautiful Girl in St. Paul, only, when he came closer, he saw that it couldn't be Miss Prentice, because Miss Prentice didn't have such Lovely Hair. Then he asked her the Month of her Birth and told her Fortune, thereby coming nearer to Holding her Hand within Eight Minutes than Eustace had come in a Lifetime.

"Play something, Boys," he Ordered, just as if he had paid them Money to come along and make Music for him.

They unlimbered their Mandolins and began to play a Sousa March. He asked Myrtle if she had seen the New Moon. She replied that she had not, so they went Outside.

When Fred and Eustace finished the First Piece, Gus appeared at the open Window, and asked them to play "The Good Old Summer Time," which had always been one of his Favorites.

So they played that, and when they had Concluded there came a Voice from the Outer Darkness, and it was the Voice of Myrtle. She said: "I'll tell you what to Play; play the Intermezzo."

Fred and Eustace exchanged Glances. They began to Perceive that they had been backed into a Siding. With a few Potted Palms in front of them, and two Cards from the Union, they would have been just the same as a Hired Orchestra.

But they played the Intermezzo and felt Peevish. Then they went to the Window and looked out. Gus and Myrtle were sitting in the Hammock, which had quite a Pitch towards the Center. Gus had braced himself by Holding to the Back of the Hammock. He did not have his Arm around Myrtle, but he had it Extended in a Line parallel with her Back. What he had done wouldn't Justify a Girl in saying, "Sir!" but it started a Real Scandal with Fred and Eustace. They saw that the only Way to Get Even with her was to go Home without saying "Good Night." So they slipped out of the Side Door, shivering with Indignation.

After that, for several Weeks, Gus kept Myrtle so Busy that she had no Time to think of considering other Candidates. He sent Books to her Mother, and allowed the Old Gentleman to take Chips away from him at Poker.

They were Married in the Autumn, and Father-in-Law took Gus into the Firm, saying that he had needed a good Pusher for a Long Time.

At the Wedding the two Mandolin Players were permitted to act as Ushers.

MORAL: To get a fair Trial of Speed, use a Pace-Maker.

THE NOTEBOOK OF M. RAVEL [1]

I DID not have the pleasure of knowing M. Ravel in the days when he was still struggling with the first principles of the English language. Like everyone else, of course, I had heard of him, and had smiled at his difficulties with the idiosyncrasies of our tongue, as reported in the newspapers of the time. You will recall, for example, his remarks in excited and broken English concerning the absurdities of the word "Fast." A horse was fast when he was tied to a hitching post. The same animal was also fast under exactly diametric circumstances—when he was running away. A woman was fast if she smoked cigarettes. A color was fast if it didn't fade. To fast was to go without food. Et cetera. What a language!

To-day, M. Ravel speaks English with only the faintest of French accents, but what he has to say is always salted with Gallic gestures and mannerisms. The other evening, after listening with polite incredulity to an account of my own present difficulties with the French language, he shrugged his shoulders.

"Perhaps. But when you have mastered it, you will understand. Like everything that is French, our language is always logical, you see. But this English! Ah! I know it; but I do not understand it."

"Logical" is the last adjective I should use in describing the French language. But I had no chance to say so.

"Listen!" said M. Ravel. "Last winter I had a very bad cold. A friend said to me, 'Jules, your voice is very husky.' Husky? As an adjective I did not know the word. As a noun it is an Eskimo. What does this mean, my voice is husky? I consulted my dictionary. 'Husky,' adjective. . . . Ah! To be sure! 'Powerful, strong, burly.' Like an Eskimo. Logical enough. Very neat! . . . Then, to myself, I frown suddenly. Husky? It is my voice my friend was speaking of. And that—most positively—is not husky! It is not strong. It is not powerful. With my cold, it is so weak I can hardly use it. Is this some American humor my friend employs? I look in the dictionary again. Ah! I discover a second meaning: 'dry, harsh, hoarse.' So! I see what

[1] Reprinted from *Atlantic Monthly* by permission.

my friend means. He says my voice is husky. He means my voice is hoarse."

M. Ravel shook his head.

"But what a language! To have a word that means 'strong' and to use it to describe a voice that is weak! Husky! It should be the voice of a man who roars like a bull. But no! In English one cannot reason out like that what one should say. One must hear first and then remember word for word. You see? For instance: to look at them,—to analyze their component parts, I mean,—'shameful' should be the antonym of 'shameless.' Should it not? But no; it is not."

I opened my mouth.

"Wait!" he said. "I shall finish the attack and then you shall launch the defense—if you will.

"I remember reading a description of a view from a mountain top—in English. Very prettily written. But it started by saying that from where the man stood he could overlook the whole valley. At that time I was even less able with English than I am now. I knew but one meaning for 'overlook.' You overlook something you forget to pack up—your opera hat, perhaps. Or you ignore something. You don't realize it is there. That is 'to overlook.' But here was a man overlooking a whole valley! There it was, spread out at his feet; and yet he overlooked it! Or rather, he was saying that from where he stood he *could* overlook it. In other words, as I thought, he said he could ignore it. I was baffled. Why should he want to ignore it? What advantage to him? The thing was pointless. To the dictionary I went. 'To overlook.' . . . Ah! I learn something. Something extraordinary. Overlook! It means to see, to see something from a point of vantage—or it means not to see the thing at all.

"Again I say, my friend, what a language! To see or not to see! And how is one to know which is meant?"

The ensuing silence was momentary.

"Once more. We Latins tell you Anglo-Saxons that you are too stiff. Sometimes you acknowledge the accusation. You say: 'Yes, yes; it is true. We do not unbend enough.' Unbend? What is that? You mean you do not *bend* enough, since you are too stiff. But you say, 'We do not *unbend* enough.' And yet when a man is stiff and firm you also say he is unbending. What an idiom!"

"Look here, Jules," I managed to interpose at last. "Have you been collecting these—these paradoxes?"

"I have a notebook full of them. I will give you another one, the word 'temper.' What a baffling word that is! You must admit it. The Lord 'tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.' He softens the wind, *n'est-ce pas?* But 'to temper' means to harden, does it not? When you harden steel, your idiom says that you temper it."

His speech grew more rapid, his gestures more abandoned.

"And what is the difference between 'to loosen' and 'to unloosen'? Will you tell me that? To fasten and to unfasten; to pack and to unpack; to do and to undo—all those are logical. But to loosen and to unloosen—can you explain? They mean one and the same, do they not? And yet they should be opposites, the one destructive of the other."

"I—well ——"

But he had rushed on.

"There are other words like those two, 'loosen' and 'unloosen.' 'Un-' is a prefix of negation; yet when you remove the husk from an ear of corn I find that—according to the dictionary—it is quite correct to say either that you husk the corn or that you unhusk it. Surely the latter is the logical way! To husk an ear of corn should mean to put the husk on. To take off the husk should be to unhusk it. Yet in the common idiom 'to husk' means what should be 'to unhusk.' Only a fool or a foreigner would say 'unhusk.'"

His eyes flashed. "It strikes me that here it is you, the native, who is the fool!"

The next instant he was all apology.

"Ah, my friend! Forgive me! I do not mean it as it sounds. It is impertinent of me to talk like this!"

"Impertinent? Why no, Jules, not at all. It's all very interesting to me, and quite to the point."

Then I grinned.

"To the point! In other words, Jules, quite pertinent. There, put that in your notebook. 'In-' is a negative prefix, and yet very often the most pertinent remark a man could make *is* the most impertinent."

My broad smile brought no echo to his face. Instead, he looked now so suddenly and completely unhappy that I hastened to add:—

"Don't mistake me, Jules. You haven't offended me at all. I've

enjoyed every word you've said. Of course the English idiom is full of absurdities."

His gloom deepened.

"And I have no doubt," I lied in further haste, "that if ever I do really master your language I shall find that it, on the contrary, is as logical as mathematics."

Still he did not smile. I became aware that something extraordinary had happened to him. His face was like the face of a boy whose favorite toy has just snapped in two.

"What's the matter, Jules?"

He seemed to hear my voice from afar. He turned his curiously luminous eyes upon me.

"Pertinent! Impertinent!" he said at last. "I never thought of *them* before." He spoke slowly. "It is very strange. I am confounded. Perhaps—perhaps it is not so illogical—the English—after all."

"No, Jules?"

He shook his head.

"No. You see, it—it is the same thing in French. We have those two words also."

A CHRISTMAS SPECTACLE [1]

FOR USE IN CHRISTMAS EVE ENTERTAINMENTS IN THE VESTRY

Robert C. Benchley

AT THE opening of the entertainment the Superintendent will step into the footlights, recover his balance apologetically, and say:

"Boys and girls of the Intermediate Department, parents and friends: I suppose you all know why we are here to-night. (At this point the audience will titter apprehensively.) Mrs. Drury and her class of little girls have been working very hard to make this enter-

[1] From *Love Conquers All*, by permission of Henry Holt and Company.

tainment a success, and I am sure that everyone here to-night is going to have what I overheard one of my boys the other day calling 'some good time.' (Indulgent laughter from the little boys.) And may I add before the curtain goes up that immediately after the entertainment we want you all to file out into the Christian Endeavor room, where there will be a Christmas tree, 'with all the fixin's,' as the boys say." (Shrill whistling from the little boys and immoderate applause from everyone.)

There will then be a wait of twenty-five minutes, while sounds of hammering and dropping may be heard from behind the curtains. The Boys' Club orchestra will render the "Poet and Peasant Overture" four times in succession, each time differently.

At last one side of the curtains will be drawn back; the other will catch on something and have to be released by hand; someone will whisper loudly, "Put out the lights," following which the entire house will be plunged into darkness. Amid catcalls from the little boys, the footlights will at last go on, disclosing:

The windows in the rear of the vestry rather ineffectively concealed by a group of small fir trees on standards, one of which has already fallen over, leaving exposed a corner of the map of Palestine and the list of gold-star classes for November. In the center of the stage is a larger tree, undecorated, while at the extreme left, invisible to everyone in the audience except those sitting at the extreme right, is an imitation fireplace, leaning against the wall.

Twenty-five seconds too early little Flora Rochester will prance out from the wings, uttering the first shrill notes of a song, and will have to be grabbed by eager hands and pulled back. Twenty-four seconds later the piano will begin "The Return of the Reindeer" with a powerful accent on the first note of each bar, and Flora Rochester, Lillian McNulty, Gertrude Hamingham, and Martha Wrist will swirl on, dressed in white, and advance heavily into the footlights, which will go out.

There will then be an interlude while Mr. Neff, the sexton, adjusts the connection, during which the four little girls stand undecided whether to brave it out or cry. As a compromise they giggle and are herded back into the wings by Mrs. Drury, amid applause. When the lights go on again, the applause becomes deafening, and as Mr.

Neff walks triumphantly away, the little boys in the audience will whistle: "There she goes, there she goes, all dressed up in her Sunday clothes!"

"The Return of the Reindeer" will be started again and the showgirls will reappear, this time more gingerly and somewhat dispirited. They will, however, sing the following, to the music of the "Ballet Pizzicato" from "Sylvia":

We greet you, we greet you,
On this Christmas Eve so fine.
We greet you, we greet you,
And wish you a good time.

They will then turn toward the tree and Flora Rochester will advance, hanging a silver star on one of the branches, meanwhile reciting a verse, the only distinguishable words of which are: "*I am Faith so strong and pure* ——"

At the conclusion of her recitation, the star will fall off.

Lillian McNulty will then step forward and hang her star on a branch, reading her lines in clear tones:

And I am Hope, a virtue great.
My gift to Christmas now I make,
That children and grown-ups may hope to-day
That to-morrow will be a merry Christmas Day.

The hanging of the third star will be consummated by Gertrude Hamingham, who will get as far as "*Sweet Charity I bring to place upon the tree* ——" at which point the strain will become too great and she will forget the remainder. After several frantic glances toward the wings, from which Mrs. Drury is sending out whispered messages to the effect that the next line begins, "*My message bright* ——" Gertrude will disappear, crying softly.

After the morale of the cast has been in some measure restored by the pianist, who, with great presence of mind, plays a few bars of "Will There Be Any Stars In My Crown?" to cover up Gertrude's exit, Martha Wrist will unleash a rope of silver tinsel from the foot of the tree, and, stringing it over the boughs as she skips around in a circle, will say, with great assurance:

'Round and 'round the tree I go,
Through the holly and the snow,

Bringing love and Christmas cheer
Through the happy year to come.

At this point there will be a great commotion and jangling of sleigh-bells off-stage, and Mr. Creamer, rather poorly disguised as Santa Claus, will emerge from the opening in the imitation fireplace. A great popular demonstration for Mr. Creamer will follow. He will then advance to the footlights, and, rubbing his pillow and ducking his knees to denote joviality, will say thickly through his false beard:

"Well, well, well, what have we here? A lot of bad little boys and girls who aren't going to get any Christmas presents this year? (Nervous laughter from the little boys and girls.) Let me see, let me see! I have a note here from Doctor Whidden. Let's see what it says. (Reads from a paper on which there is obviously nothing written.) 'If you and the young people of the Intermediate Department will come into the Christian Endeavor room, I think we may have a little surprise for you. . . .' Well, well, well! What do you suppose it can be? (Cries of 'I know, I know!' from sophisticated ones in the audience.) Maybe it is a bottle of castor-oil! (Raucous jeers from the little boys and elaborately simulated disgust on the part of the little girls.) Well, anyway, suppose we go out and see? Now if Miss Liftnagle will oblige us with a little march on the piano, we will all form in single file——"

At this point there will ensue a stampede toward the Christian Endeavor room, in which chairs will be broken, decorations demolished, and the protesting Mr. Creamer badly hurt.

This will bring to a close the first part of the entertainment.

THE ARTLESS PRATTLE OF CHILDHOOD [1]

Robert Jones Burdette

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

WE ALWAYS did pity a man who does not love childhood. There is something morally wrong with such a man. In every age and clime the best and noblest men loved children. The great men of the earth love them. Dogs love them. Ah, yes, we all love children.

And what a pleasure it is to talk with them! Who can chatter with a bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked, quick-witted little darling, anywhere from three to five years, and not appreciate the pride which swells a mother's breast when she sees her little ones admired? Ah, yes, to be sure.

One day—ah, can we never cease to remember that dreamy, idle summer afternoon—a lady friend, who was down in the city on a shopping excursion, came into the sanctum with her little son, a dear little tid-toddler of five bright summers, and begged us to amuse him while she pursued the duties which called her down town. Such a bright boy; so delightful it was to talk to him.

"Now, listen, Clary," we said to him—his name was Clarence Fitzherbert Alençon de Marchemont Caruthers—"and learn about George Washington."

"Who's he?" inquired Clarence, etc.

"Listen," we said; "he was the father of his country."

"Whose country?"

"Ours—yours and mine; the confederated union of the American people, cemented with the life-blood of the men of '76, poured out upon the altars of our country as the dearest libation to liberty that her votaries can offer."

"Who did?" asked Clarence.

There is a peculiar tact in talking to children that very few people possess. Now, most people would have grown impatient and lost

[1] Reprinted from *The Rise and Fall of the Mustache*, by permission of Clara Burdette and the Clara Vista Press.

their temper when little Clarence asked so many irrelevant questions, but we did not. We knew that, however careless he might appear at first, we could soon interest him in the story, and he would be all eyes and ears. And so smiling, we went on:

"Well, one day George's father . . ."

"George who?" asked Clarence.

"George Washington. He was a little boy then, just like you. One day his father ——"

"Whose father?" demanded Clarence, with an encouraging expression of interest.

"George Washington's—this great man we are telling you of. One day George Washington's father gave him a little hatchet for a ——"

"Gave who a little hatchet?" the dear child interrupted with a gleam of bewitching intelligence. Most men would have betrayed signs of impatience, but we didn't. We know how to talk to children, so we went on:

"George Washington. His ——"

"Who gave him the little hatchet?"

"His father. And his father ——"

"Whose father?"

"George Washington's."

"Oh!"

"Yes, George Washington. And his father told him ——"

"Told who?"

"Told George."

"Oh, yes, George."

And we went on, just as patient and pleasant as you could imagine. We took up the story right where the boy interrupted, for we could see that he was just crazy to hear the end of it. We said:

"And he told him that ——"

"Who told him what?" Clarence broke in.

"Why, George's father told George."

"What did he tell him?"

"Why that's just what I'm going to tell you. He told him ——"

"Who told him?"

"George's father. He ——"

"What for?"

"Why, so he wouldn't do what he told him not to do. He told him he must be careful with the hatchet ——"

"Who must be careful?"

"George must."

"Oh!"

"Yes, must be careful with the hatchet ——"

"What hatchet?"

"Why, George's."

"Oh!"

"Yes; with the hatchet, and not cut himself with it, or drop it in the cistern, or leave it out in the grass all night. So George went around cutting everything he could reach with his hatchet. At last he came to a splendid apple tree, his father's favorite, and cut it down ——"

"Who cut it down?"

"George did."

"Oh!"

"But his father came home and saw it the first thing, and ——"

"Saw the hatchet?"

"No, saw the apple tree. And he said, 'Who has cut down my favorite apple tree?' "

"What apple tree?"

"George's father's. And everybody said they didn't know anything about it, and ——"

"Anything about what?"

"The apple tree."

"Oh!"

"And George came up and heard his father and the men talking about it."

"What was they talking about?"

"About this apple tree."

"What apple tree?"

"The favorite apple tree that George cut down."

"George who?"

"George Washington."

"Oh!"

"So George came up and heard them talking about it and ——"

"What did he cut it down for?"

"Just to try his little hatchet."

"Whose little hatchet?"

"Why his own; the one his father gave him."

"Oh!"

"So George came up and he said, 'Father, I cannot tell a lie. It was I cut down your apple tree. I did ——'"

"His father did?"

"No, no. It was George said this."

"Said he cut his father?"

"No, no, no. Said he cut down his apple tree."

"George's apple tree?"

"No, no. His father's."

"Oh!"

"He said ——"

"His father said?"

"No, no, no; George said, 'Father I cannot tell a lie. I did it with my little hatchet.' And his father said, 'Noble boy, I would rather lose a thousand trees than have you tell a lie.'"

"George did?"

"No, his father said that."

"Said he'd rather have a thousand apple trees?"

"No, no, no; said he'd rather lose a thousand apple trees than ——"

"Said he'd rather George would?"

"No; said he'd rather he would than have him lie."

"Oh, George would rather have his father lie?"

We are patient, and we love children, but if Mrs. Caruthers, of Arch street, hadn't come and got her prodigy at this critical juncture, we don't believe all Burlington could have pulled us out of this snarl. And as Clarence Fitzherbert Alençon de Marchemont Caruthers patted down the stairs, we heard him telling his mother about a boy who had a father named George, and he told him to cut down an apple tree, and he said he'd rather tell a thousand lies than cut down one apple tree.

A MORAL LITTLE TALE [1]

Lord Dunsany

THERE was once an earnest Puritan who held it wrong to dance. And for his principles he labored hard, his was a zealous life. And there loved him, all of those who hated the dance; and those that loved the dance respected him too; they said, "He is a pure, good man and acts according to his lights."

He did much to discourage dancing and helped to close several Sunday entertainments. Some kinds of poetry, he said, he liked, but not the fanciful kind as that might corrupt the thoughts of the very young. He always dressed in black.

He was interested in morality and was quite sincere and there grew to be much respect on Earth for his honest face and his flowing pure-white beard.

One night the Devil appeared unto him in a dream and said, "Well done."

"Avaunt," said that earnest man.

"No, no, friend," said the Devil.

"Dare not to call me 'friend,' " he answered bravely.

"Come, come, friend," said the Devil. "Have you not done my work? Have you not put apart the couples that would dance? Have you not checked their laughter and their accursed mirth? Have you not worn my livery of black? O friend, friend, you do not know what a detestable thing it is to sit in hell and hear people being happy, and singing in theaters and singing in the fields, and whispering after dances under the moon," and he fell to cursing fearfully.

"It is you," said the Puritan, "that put into their hearts the evil desire to dance; and black is God's own livery, not yours."

And the Devil laughed contemptuously and spoke.

"He only made the silly colors," he said, "and useless dawns on hill-slopes facing South, and butterflies flapping along them as soon

[1] Reprinted from *Fifty-One Tales*, by Lord Dunsany. Copyrighted by Little, Brown & Company.

as the sun rose high, and foolish maidens coming out to dance, and the warm mad West wind, and worst of all that pernicious influence Love."

And when the Devil said that God made Love that earnest man sat up in bed and shouted "Blasphemy! Blasphemy!"

"It's true," said the Devil. "It isn't I that send the village fools muttering and whispering two by two in the woods when the harvest moon is high, it's as much as I can bear even to see them dancing."

"Then," said the man, "I have mistaken right for wrong; but as soon as I wake I will fight you yet."

"Oh, no you don't," said the Devil. "You don't wake up out of this sleep."

And somewhere far away Hell's black steel doors were opened, and arm in arm those two were drawn within, and the doors shut behind them and still they went arm in arm, trudging further and further into the deeps of Hell, and it was that Puritan's punishment to know that those that he cared for on Earth would do evil as he had done.

ABOUT BATHROOMS [1]

A. P. Herbert

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

OF ALL the beautiful things which are to be seen in shop windows, perhaps the most beautiful are those luxurious baths in white enamel, hedged around with attachments and conveniences in burnished metal. Whenever I see one of them I stand and covet it for a long time. Yet even these super-baths fall far short of what a bath should be; and as for the perfect bathroom, I question if any one has even imagined it.

The whole attitude of modern civilization to the bathroom is wrong.

[1] Reprinted from *Little Rays of Moonshine* by A. P. Herbert, by and with permission of and special arrangement with Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., authorized publishers.

Why, for one thing, is it always the smallest and barest room in the house? The Romans understood these things; we don't. I have never yet been in a bathroom which was big enough to do my exercises in without either breaking the light or barking my knuckles against a wall. It ought to be a *big* room and opulently furnished. There ought to be pictures in it, so that one could lie back and contemplate them—a picture of troops going up to the trenches, and another picture of a bus-queue standing in the rain, and another picture of a windy day with some snow in it. Then one would really enjoy one's baths.

And there ought to be rich rugs in it and profound chairs; one would walk about in bare feet on the rich rugs while the bath was running; and one would sit in the profound chairs while drying the ears.

The fact is, a bathroom ought to be equipped for comfort, like a drawing-room, a good, full, velvety room; and as things are it is solely equipped for singing. In the drawing-room, where we want to sing, we put so many curtains and carpets and things that most of us can't sing at all. Nothing is more maddening than to hear several men refusing to join in a simple chorus after dinner, when you know perfectly well that every one of them has been singing in a high tenor in his bath before dinner. We all know the reason, but we don't take the obvious remedy. The only thing to do is to take all the furniture out of the drawing-room and put it in the bathroom—all except the piano and a few cane chairs. Then we shouldn't have those terrible noises in the early morning, and in the evening everybody would be a singer.

But if we cannot make the bathroom what it ought to be, the supreme and perfect shrine of the supreme moment of the day, the one spot in the house on which no expense or trouble is spared, we can at least bring the bath itself up to date. I don't now, as I did, lay much stress on having a bath with fifteen different taps. I once stayed in a house with a bath like that. There was a hot tap and a cold tap, and hot sea-water and cold sea-water, and PLUNGE and SPRAY and SHOWER and WAVE and FLOOD, and one or two more. To turn on the top tap you had to stand on a step-ladder, and they were all very highly polished. I was naturally excited by this, and an hour before it was time to dress for dinner I slunk upstairs and hurried into the

bathroom and locked myself in and turned on all the taps at once. It was strangely disappointing. The sea-water was mythical. Many of the taps refused to function at the same time as any other, and the only two which were really effective were WAVE and FLOOD. WAVE shot out a thin jet of boiling water which caught me in the chest, and FLOOD filled the bath with cold water long before it could be identified and turned off.

No, taps are not of the first importance, though, properly polished, they look well. But no bath is complete without one of these attractive bridges or trays where one puts the sponges and the soap. Conveniences like that are a direct stimulus to washing. The first time I met one I washed myself all over two or three times simply to make the most of knowing where the soap was. Now and then, in fact, in a sort of bravado I deliberately lost it, so as to be able to catch it again and put it back in full view on the tray. You can also rest your feet on the tray when you are washing them, and so avoid cramp.

Again I like a bathroom where there is an electric bell just above the bath, which you can ring with the big toe. This is for use when one has gone to sleep in the bath and the water is frozen, or when one has begun to commit suicide and thought better of it. Apart from these two occasions it can be used for coding instructions about breakfast to the cook—supposing you have a cook. And if you haven't a cook a little bell-ringing in the basement does no harm.

The same applies to smoking. It is incredible that to-day in the twentieth century there should be no recognized way of disposing of cigarette-ends in the bath. I have a brother-in-law who smokes cigars in the bath, a disgusting habit. I have often wondered where he hid the ends, and I find now that he has made a *cache* of them in the gas-ring of the geyser. One day the ash will get into the burners and then the geyser will explode.

Next door to the smoking tray should be the book-rest. I don't myself do much reading in the bath, but I have several sisters-in-law who keep on coming to stay, and they all do it. Few things make the leaves of a book stick together so easily as being dropped in a hot bath, so they had better have a book-rest; and if they go to sleep I shall set in motion my emergency waste mechanism, by which the bath can be emptied in malice from outside.

Another of my inventions is the Progress Indicator. It works like the indicators outside lifts, which show where the lift is and what it is doing. My machine shows what stage the man inside has reached —the washing stage or the merely wallowing stage, or the drying stage, or the exercises stage. It shows you at a glance whether it is worth while to go back to bed or whether it is time to dig yourself in on the mat. The machine is specially suitable for hotels and large country houses where you can't find out by hammering on the door and asking, because nobody takes any notice.

When you have properly fitted out the bathroom on these lines, all that remains is to put the telephone in and have your meals there; or rather to have your meals there and not put the telephone in. It must still remain the one room where one is safe from that.

THE INVENTOR ENTERS HEAVEN [1]

James Rorty

For some years the deaf old man had contemplated his departure from the terrestrial scene without reluctance, without fear, but with a certain characteristic curiosity. Perhaps for that reason his translated self was moved to linger briefly, before beginning its celestial journey, to assist at the unprecedented tribute with which America honored the memory of her greatest inventor.

It had been rather imaginatively conceived, after the manner of the English celebration of Armistice Day. Promptly at half-past eight on the evening of the funeral, the main switches of the power stations clicked in unison, and in darkness America mourned her loss. Light and sound and motion were all pinched out in this sudden pause. The radio, too, was silent—had not the great inventor anticipated this whole development decades ago?

All over America millions of awed people sat in the darkened motion-picture houses, facing screens which had suddenly gone

[1] Reprinted from *The Nation* by permission of the author.

blank; minds turned inward upon the mind's blank curtain; dismayed, and groping uncertainly for the rusty tools of image-making; struggling painfully in vacuum, as the fetus struggles in the womb; hating birth and begging for the return of the anæsthetic flicker of false love, false birth, false death.

Yet here and there something stirred in that darkness. A boy's hand felt for his girl, who covered his hand with hers. Together they rose and crept out into the wider darkness, the more entranced silence, of Broadway. All traffic had stopped; the extinguished bulbs which festooned the façades of the buildings drooped like paper garlands, withered by the sudden frost of silence and darkness. Broadway was like an abandoned motion-picture set, unreal beneath the casual silver of the brightened moon.

Suddenly the lights snapped on. The ten-minute tribute of darkness and silence was over, and now the ether vibrated with the earth-girdling bellow of the greatest radio hook-up in history. The eulogistic phrases were familiar—too familiar; so was the toneless voice of an ex-President of the United States for whom the great inventor remembered voting. But he could *hear* now, since death had stripped him of his protective infirmity. Muttering sadly to himself, the old man pressed his fingers to his ears.

From everlasting unto everlasting stretched the glassy sea. Beside it rose the ramparts of the Kingdom, tower on tower, praising the Most High in soaring splendors of jade and chrysoprase. Like the choiring meadow larks of a California spring, like a pæan of light made vocal, came the celestial antiphony: "Alleluia! Alleluia! Allelu-u-u-ia!" All this was as it should be, reflected the inventor. Yet it did not seem quite right that the gate of the heavenly mansions should look a little like the entrance of the New York post office, even though much vaster and more luminous. And the inscription over the portico was different. It was difficult to read—something about children.

Reading this, the great inventor felt himself very old, and a little hesitant. The ceaseless iteration of the alleluiaing angels struck him, too, as a little fatuous. He could see them now, hundreds of them, stationed at intervals along the heavenly ramparts. There was one close by the gate, a magnificent winged creature, clothed only in

light so that the inventor could not help observing that the seraph was appropriately sexless. Soon, he reflected, it would be this one's turn, and even as he watched—

"Allelu ——"

"Shut up!"

The voice which had so rudely interrupted the celestial antiphony was anything but seraphic. Equally incongruous was the appearance of the bearded ancient who had suddenly appeared through a side gate, hurriedly thrusting his arms through a monk's cassock.

"Come right in. You're expected."

This, then, would be St. Peter. Smiling diffidently, the inventor mounted the steps while he gathered his thoughts together for the speech which would undoubtedly be expected of him. Also, he reflected with a throb of apprehension, there would be those terrible reporters. Their questions always fell into two categories: things that God Himself couldn't answer, and things that didn't matter. It was almost as if America hadn't manifested a bit of adult curiosity in the last decade. The worst of it was that a coerced answer to a foolish question is always equally foolish. For years he had been obliged to celebrate his birthday by writing himself down a conceited, priggish child. And he wasn't that. Damned if he was!

"On the contrary, you're damned if you're not."

"I beg pardon? You know I'm a little deaf."

"I beg *your* pardon. You know quite well that in your present state you are nothing of the sort. Neither am I. Nor am I deaf to the thoughts which you have just been thinking. I must say that you have changed greatly since we received our last report of you. As you see, I have had the gates opened, but perhaps it would be as well for us to wait and talk a bit before we go in."

Silently, before the dazzled eyes of the inventor, the gates of pearl rolled back, disclosing a limitless vista of towers and castles. Something in the pyramidal, stepped-back style of the heavenly architecture struck the inventor as familiar. The resemblance was intensified by the din of riveters and the hiss of welding machines that surged out through the heavenly gates. Familiar, too, were the banners swung high above the streets of gold and bearing the inscription: "Forward, Heaven. Business Is Good. Keep It Good."

"Heaven seems very populous," remarked the inventor mildly.

"Frightful! Frightful! A while back we had a slight recession. Some of your people were caught long on bliss and threatened to grow up. But now they're coming again faster than ever. And you can't turn 'em away. That's the rule, you know. Of such is the kingdom of heaven." The guardian saint pointed at the inscription over the portico.

"But I didn't realize that earth had produced so many good people!"

"Good? What's good? All that's beside the point. The twentieth century will probably go down as the most exquisitely childlike period in human history. That last children's crusade your fellow-countryman Wilson was so keen about—we were simply swamped! Haven't caught up yet. A new mob of children at the gates every day. They seem to come faster and faster."

"But how about hell?"

"Hell! There's a deserted village for you. They haven't had a baker's dozen in the last ten years. You ought to see it."

The inventor's mind leaped to a new vista. Even in the presence of eternal bliss the habit of curiosity is not easily suppressed.

"Do you know," he started, "if you wouldn't mind ——"

But the saint gestured for silence. The din of the riveters had ceased. In the profound silence of eternity the inventor could hear the soft fall of pin feathers upon the streets of gold, dropped by the processions of the saved moving back and forth over the celestial causeways. Suddenly a burst of choral music shook the ramparts.

"That's the Celestial Rotary Chorus," explained Saint Peter. "They're rehearsing their welcoming song for you. Listen!"

The chorus swelled in volume until the words were clearly distinguishable. It was the song which George M. Cohan had composed for the celebration of Light's Golden Jubilee, the fiftieth anniversary of his greatest invention:

He is
A Wiz.

The inventor remembered it only too well, and blushed.

"The voices seem—well, perhaps a little light."

"Of course," answered the saint. "That's the Rotarians. Boy sopranos. Always have been and always will be. Time without end. God knows I've heard enough of them."

The accent of bitterness in the saint's voice was unmistakable. Seeing the surprise in the inventor's expression, he shrugged his shoulders. "You're thinking that heaven is perfect? Well, it is. Perfect for children. But I'm not in it. I'm the gate-keeper. It's your heaven, not mine. Come along, the Rotarians are waiting for you—Hey! Wait, where are you going?" For the old inventor had spread the tail of his frock coat like a sail and was in full flight toward the abyss of night.

"Do you mean to say," shouted the saint as he caught up with him, "that you actually don't *want* to enter heaven?"

The inventor turned and stared at him. "I'll see you in hell first," he stated succinctly.

Throwing back his head, the guardian of the gate laughed long and loud. "See me in hell first, eh? That *is* an idea. Wish I might. No such luck for me. And what, by the way, makes you think that *you'll* get in? Hell is very exclusive. For adults only, you know."

"So I gathered," replied the inventor with dignity. Then, as the memory of his earthly frustrations gathered force: "Do you suppose I enjoyed seeing my life-work made trivial and ridiculous? I was an inventor—it was my passion to use the tools of science for the service of mankind. I gave the world light—good light, cheap light. Is it my fault if they used it to outrage the beauty and peace of the night—to make a cheap bazaar out of every street and avenue, selling one another cigarettes and chewing gum at the rate of a million candle-power a minute? I gave them the phonograph, so that every man, woman, and child might know the glory of great music and great speech; so that the great singer, the great instrumentalist, might have all future generations of men for his audience. So I thought and dreamed. Yet today I am afraid there is less music in the heart and mind of the common man than ever before in history. I gave them the motion picture. At first I thought it was a toy. Then, too late, I saw that it was the medium of a new art. For by that time it had become merely a new racket for the pants-makers, and millions of minds were being trivialized and anæsthetized by that endless flicker of falseness and venality. How much of my work was actually applied to the service of a sane humanity? How much of it was cheapened and perverted by the greed of men, the mechanical greed of money to make more money? My work was honest work. I never

cared for money—never thought about it. You imply that my work helped to fill that vulgar adolescent heaven of yours. I deny it. At any rate, it's your heaven, not mine. I want none of it."

The guardian of the gate had listened to this outburst with growing admiration. "Do you know," he remarked, "I think perhaps you have a chance. Be sure to tell all this to Lucifer the first thing. You understand the basis of the divine categories, don't you? Heaven is for children and nose-followers, people who follow their noses like the animals, only not so well; people who praise God because they have never grown up enough to respect and praise themselves. Hell, on the other hand, is for adults and hell-raisers; people who praise and serve man from everlasting unto everlasting; who follow Lucifer in the revolt that one day will shake the stars. From the divine point of view, heaven is the abode of that mercy which is death; whereas hell is the home of the immortals and the eternal outpost of hope. Goodby and good luck to you. And give my regards to your friend Steinmetz."

"Steinmetz? But Steinmetz was not a bad man."

"There you go again! Good or bad, he went to hell like a shot. So did Aristotle, and Francis Bacon, and Galileo, and Newton, and Darwin, and Michael Faraday in spite of all his piety, and Gregor Mendel in spite of his priest's cassock, and that old viking Thorstein Veblen who wrote 'The Place of Science in Modern Civilization.' Oh, you'll have excellent company."

On the brink of the abyss the old inventor halted and turned a troubled face to his celestial mentor. "There's just one thing," he murmured. "Henry . . . You know, I am greatly attached to Henry. Do you suppose ——"

"I think so. Yes, I'm confident of it. Henry has a great many things to repent. He's a very unconventional man and he's still growing. Remember, also, that he's never asked for mercy—not even from the bankers."

Again through the gates of pearl came the shrill chorus of the Rotarians.

"They're welcoming an ex-President of the United States," explained Saint Peter. "You know him—a very good man. It seems he burst a blood-vessel broadcasting your funeral elegy."

The inventor smiled—with a certain diabolism. For already, in

anticipation, the fires of hell warmed his heart with a fine glow of adult malice.

"Serve him right," he said. "I never liked him."

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THE DECAY OF CONVERSATION[1]

Philip Wagner

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

I RISE to lament the growing prevalence of information—and what is worse, of accurate and specific information. There is an undeniable tendency these days to be well-informed on matters of moment and the result is that conversation is being ruined. The rise of the daily press, of the encyclopædia, of books of reference bearing upon everything imaginable, of question-and-answer columns, and of the publicity industry has made access to useful information so lamentably easy that it is becoming quite impossible to make a simple misstatement of fact with any assurance of getting by with it.

This, I feel, is most unfortunate. Conversation has always flourished most nobly on a general lack of specific facts. What fun is there when your boldest and most dogmatic assertions are met by the blunt statement that the figures prove such and such, and that charts may be cited to controvert so and so? Speculation, that fine flower of conversation (which as everyone knows can be indulged in only when one does not know what one is talking about), has been driven to the wall. I begin to fear that fireside chats will shortly have to be conducted with a *World Almanac* in one hand, a *Conklin's Argument Settler* in the other, a volume of *Who's Who* at the feet, and the *Dictionary of Useful Information* poised on the knee.

I paint a gloomy picture? Perhaps; but no gloomier than the present trend of conversation would seem to indicate.

Only the other evening there occurred a case in point. I have a dis-

[1] Reprinted from *Harper's Magazine*, with the permission of the author.

tinguished friend, an elderly gentleman grown old in the profession of medicine. Like many elderly physicians, he considers himself something of an authority on social and political philosophy. For several years he has been especially violent on the subject of the Soviet regime in Russia. And he has won many an argument about this Russian question (they have been good arguments, too) simply by the overpowering force of his eloquence. When the argument reaches what might be considered dangerous ground he turns and unleashes such a magnificent blast of rhetoric that his antagonist is withered into silence.

But the other evening the old gentleman was undone. His dinner had been excellent and he was in unusually fine shape. In no time at all he had annihilated about half the Russian nation. It was a gorgeous performance—something to warm the most truculent heart. Then a determined-looking young man spoke up. Did the venerable gentleman know (he inquired) that the Russian standard of living had described such and such a curve; that the Gosplan was engaged at this very moment in doing this and that; and that the growth of the Russian beet-sugar industry had performed no less than fourteen loop-the-loops in the last two and four-tenths fiscal years? No. The venerable gentleman did not know these facts; and that is why his views on Russia had always been so interesting.

Murder, polemic murder, was done that evening. The young man mopped up the floor with my distinguished friend and his arguments. I don't suppose the old chap will ever get over it.

Such incidents as this, which seem to recur with an ever-growing frequency, are behind my gloomy prophecy about the future of conversation. If earnest persons continue to bone up on the economic aspects of Bolshevism and what not, we must all face the consequences. The urge for useful information, I am afraid, will not be denied. And I can see only one way out.

The solution which I put forward with all humility is that we find a moral equivalent for useful information. This, of course, is useless information. If mankind can be persuaded to cultivate useless information there is still hope.

A certain acquaintance of mine has been doing just this thing for a number of years; and I can say in all truthfulness that his conver-

sation has a verve, a freshness, and a charm which is all too seldom to be found in these arid days. Several years ago he was placed by accident on the mailing list of the Anti-venin Institute of America, an organization which devotes its energies to the task (a laudable one, too) of thwarting the instincts of snakes and other venomous reptiles. Ever since that fortunate day he has been receiving the Institute's bulletins—well illustrated with pictures of snakes and lizards of all kinds, and filled with a store of information almost as useless as one could wish. My friend can describe in the most charming detail the home life of the so-called Frilled Lizard (a large Australian agamoid lizard). Or when the conversation leans dangerously toward the trend of business consolidation he regales his group of guests with some blithe anecdote calculated to instill a just fear of the South American Basilisk (a beast notorious for the membranous bag which rises above its occiput).

There is another of my friends who is interested in this sort of thing. If given half an opportunity, he will quote at memory from a book by Robert Morrison entitled, *The Individuality of the Pig; Its Breeding, Feeding, and Management.* Since he has never been within a hundred yards of a pig in his life, he considers this useless information. This same good friend will explain, if a suitable chance appears, just who the gypsies are and why they are what they are, or just how a certain Scotchman named MacAdam got himself famous by inventing macadam pavement. And I have heard him hold forth on the general subject of things to eat, telling, for example, of the West Arabian Bedouin, whose idea of a good time is to sit down and consume a sheep which has been boiled in a vat of buttermilk.

And when a number of such collectors of useless information are gathered together—especially if they be collectors of diverse tastes—I maintain that the art of conversation is given a new vitality. Such a gathering is not, strictly speaking, the occasion for a rebirth of the *old* art, of conversation; because that, as I said, depends upon the wide prevalence of no information at all. What comes into being is something quite new; a conversation of illimitable possibilities, which takes account of the new and growing urge for facts, yet is infinitely more sprightly than the actuarial orgies which now get by as small talk.

THE ART OF AFTER-DINNER ORATORY[1]

Frank J. Wilstach

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

It is an easy matter to make a good after-dinner speech. A stack of books have been written on the subject, but they are to no purpose. All one has to do is to follow the advice of Arthur Brisbane to the young reporter: "Be brilliant! Be brilliant!"

Almost anything in the way of a wheeze passes for brilliancy in a speech. A mere gesture often gets a handclap. The diners so often are grateful for anything above downright stupidity that they will welcome even a stale vaudeville joke, and yelp with delight. It might be just as well, also, to supplement Mr. Brisbane's advice with the injunction: Be brief! Be brief!

The ease with which a dinner crowd can be amused is evident to all banqueters—and more particularly to those who are not seated at the guest table. Every one says this on the way to or from a banquet. But once you get on your feet, despite a firm resolve to sparkle and scintillate, you go right on and make a spectacle of yourself.

The successful after-dinner speaker, the expert after-dinner speaker, is little else, ordinarily, than an expert monologist joined to a human megaphone. He can be depended upon after a few trite remarks, to grind out a batch of threadbare anecdotes—and get away with it!

The best after-dinner speeches—if there are any best—came from the heart, and not one of these was more than a few words long. One that I recall was made by the late Charles Klein, author of "The Music Master" and "The Lion and the Mouse," at a banquet in the Lambs Club some years ago. Introduced, Mr. Klein rose in a dazed condition, he pushed his glass to one side, he made an open space in front of him, he took his watch out of his pocket and laid it on the table, and then said, appealingly:

"Will somebody hit me over the head with a bottle?"

He said what he felt. It was fine.

[1] By permission of the author.

A few years ago, when Wilton Lackaye was playing in Chicago, he was down for a speech at a certain gathering. He expected, for he had been promised, to be called early—to have, as the actors say, a good place on the bill. But one speaker after another was called on; hour after hour dragged by, and so Lackaye became uneasy and finally infuriated. Late in the evening, when everybody was bored to distraction, the toastmaster announced that "Wilton Lackaye, the famous actor, will now address you." Mr. Lackaye arose to his feet and said:

"Toastmaster and gentlemen: My address is the Lambs Club, New York." It was admirable. Nothing could have been better.

George Bernard Shaw was once a guest of honour at a women's club in London. Toward the end of the meal the toastmistress rose to her feet and said:

"What is the pleasure of the meeting? Will you have a nice time for a little while longer, or will you now hear Mr. Shaw?"

In Boston one night, years ago, Ethel Barrymore was present at a banquet, and down for a speech. The toastmaster announced that the assembled company "would now hear a famous actress for nothing who, when she appeared in the theatre, charged $1.50 for each seat." Miss Barrymore rose to her feet and said:

"You are mistaken. My price is $2."

And she sat down. Good enough! Plenty! Why more?

The average after-dinner speaker is, ordinarily, a hand organ grinding out old jokes. Once somebody cried out: "Louder, louder!" Whereupon another voice yelled: "Yes, funnier, funnier!" At another dinner a speaker asked: "What shall I talk about?" And somebody yelled: "Talk about a minute and sit down!"

So you will see from all this that the secret of pleasing a crowd at a dinner table is twofold: Be brilliant, be brief, and if possible, be funny.

One of the great difficulties of most after-dinner speakers is how to wind up their discourse, after the fashion—as they say in vaudeville, of "leaving them laughing." Usually, the chronics of after-dinner oratory lean heavily upon some such stout crutch as the following:

"Now, I suppose, after having been on my feet as long as I have

this evening, you feel about me much as the country dude who took his girl for a buggy ride. They hadn't gone far when he asked her: 'Will you marry me?' 'Yes,' said the willing maiden—after which there was a somewhat protracted silence as they jogged along, mile after mile. Finally the maiden asked: 'Why don't you say something?' And the young man replied, somewhat timorously: 'I have said too much already.'"

One of the very best after-dinner speeches was made by a Hoosier schoolboy. Called upon for a speech he said:

"I was told that I was expected to make a speech. But I know nothing about making a speech. Speechmaking is not in my line. I can't do it. Others seem to know how to make a speech, but I can't make one. I told my father this afternoon that I was to be called on for a speech, but I did not know how to do it. Father said: 'Son, get on your feet; say you do not know how to make a speech and then sit down gracefully.'"

It might be just as well to slip in the suggestion that, to make a go at after-dinner speechmaking, brevity and brilliance are not everything. I have heard many a speech which was enthralling to hear, but when read next day proved flat, pointless drivel.

There is some mystery to all this. Many a man who will talk to you for hours in a lucid and picturesque manner, asked to stand up and say something with which he is thoroughly conversant, will hum, haw and go brain blind. It is really terrifying how, once they get on their feet, some folk lose every ounce of sense of which they are possessed. And, on the other hand, an individual who hasn't an idea in his head, will manage, somehow, to thump away at his task and make quite an impression. Impudence and lung power seem to carry some people a long, long way.

However, rather than advise dependence on cubic lung power, I would say that it is safer, if you can't be brilliant, to be still!

3. *Essays in Descriptive Mood*

PARIS RAIN AND LONDON RAIN[1]

Joseph Auslander

IN ALL the world there is no rain like Paris rain. Even in that city of superlatives rain is a fiercely isolated phenomenon, something that is quite detached from the common diuturnities.

London in November drizzles; the magnificent dinginess of centuries cakes and clutters; it is humid rather than wet, vaporous rather than dank. The busses go sucking adhesively, swinging in soft yellow blossoms of light up Regent Street or High Holborn to the Circus. Trafalgar swims in the sweat of rain.

But Paris is different, vividly different. Rain in Paris is an event, not a routine. You cannot dismiss it with a shrug as humdrum; it visits the city; it is vigilant; it is impulsive; it is an ecstatic gesture. Out of the peaked and pinched violet sky a chaos of incalculable silver descends. The flurry palpitates like the motion of a coquette's fan. The taxi rackets and lurches radiantly. Your red-cheeked driver beams. He buttons the points of his furious black mustachios as you might button a pair of foils. There is the tinkle of rain in his adroit inquiry. You hesitate. Another tinkle. You step in. "Monsieur désirez —ah oui, Boulevard Mont Parnasse—deux cents quarante-quatre—c'est ça!" The tinkle is done. You are off in a smother of carbon monoxide and a rattle of tin. The tires cluck and strain.

Rue du Rivoli. The glistening gold of the upward figure of Joan the Maid, mounted superbly, her sword piercing the rain glitter. Shops. The gusty wash down their windows, the zigzagging freshets along the grooves of corrugated arcade. Smoke of rain. Pedestrians gesticulating wildly at the busses marked "Complet." Faces criss-

[1] Reprinted by permission of the author and *The Christian Science Monitor.*

crossed by the oblique color of rain—shot gleaming past you—shivered to white shadow—blurred to indefinable beauty—weird—wistful—haunting. Umbrellas performing the brave circuit of defiance, darting, bobbing, bulging desperately.

* * *

The Tuileries. Pale, unearthly, breathless gray vista; drenched trees that exude the liquid glimmer of rain; the swirl of dislocated leaves; the matter, the listless, the abandoned; the slap of leaves against your taxi windows. And then the Seine. The cold thrill; the weepy blue and fuzzy caterpillar pink of the lights along the Quai Voltaire; the flat coal barges, like snakes, leaving a creased, livid, silver flutter in the current.

And then the bookstalls! oh the mad bookstalls awninged under rags and tar paper and ingenuities of cloth. The old and voluminous women hovering expansively, protectively over their brood. You knock your knuckles on the glass partition. Jehu hears not. You bang frantically. Jehu turns in swift mid-career, eye cocked quizzically. "Bien, monsieur wishes to inspect the stalls. It is well." Books, books. Books will be the undoing of you some day. But of that day, later, if you will.

Cross the Channel from Calais to Dover under the clawing rain and the crying of the white gulls, peevish, instinct with windy terror. Desert the sodden deck for the soaking railway carriage. Get the smell of damp clothes and soggy boots as it rises and penetrates and insists. Contemplate the dismal prospect of the landscape heaving in circles, blotchy green, mottled umber, spinning round and round like the spokes of an enormous wheel, spilling up and up almost at your window, then yawning incredibly off and down into the immediate whirl behind it.

And finally—London! And the great crushed smell creeping out of the rain, vaguely known, violently familiar. The ooze of London, the clamminess, very sullen, very stealthy; the whole city sheeted in an intense and swarthy shining. Perspiration on windows, on wood. Trickle in crevices of mortar and steel. Steady vertical pallor—but a dark pallor—over bronze, over iron.

* * *

The Thames Embankment. Night picks her way gravely, choicely, gingerly like a cat, and sits on silent haunches watching the river. This is Whistler's Thames, a nocturne in aquatint. "No one," says the Englishman Lucas, "no one fishes in it from the sides, as Parisian idlers fish in the Seine; no one rows on it for pleasure; no one haunts its banks in the search for old books and prints. Our river is not interesting to us; its Strand, one of our most crowded streets, has to be a hundred yards inland to become popular."

There is pathos in this passage from "A Wanderer in London"; and yet, standing as I have stood just where the Embankment swoops on a grim, luminous curve toward Cleopatra's Needle, the Houses of Parliament oscillating in mystery and movement, translated to Xanadu by the black magic of the night and rain, I have suddenly, in a vision, seen barges of pleasance and boats of delight, caparisoned with purple and gold and banners, accoutered as for certain royal triumph, moving like swans to moorage at some palace's water steps. I have seen Sir Walter Raleigh offer the profound and gallant courtesy of his hand to his Queen. I have seen Her Illustrious Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, sweep by the bravery of her ladies-in-waiting and her courtiers on the arm of Her Worshipful Servant.

I have seen—but always, just as suddenly, the world has irrupted, crashing through the spell as though it were a filament of gossamer, either in the person of a whistling grocer's assistant home bound, or one of those ubiquitous lavender women and vendors of violet bunches. Always these and such as these have wagged their tongues in noise so rude against me that the beautiful chimera has evaporated to nihility, and I have found myself solitary and shivering in the monotonous night rain.

ARC LIGHTS AND BLOOD[1]

Bruce Bliven

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

OVERHEAD, the cool black star-dusted dome of a glorious autumn night is shut out and forgotten; for we who have gathered here in this great place have other business on foot than beauty and peace. There are, as all the newspapers will proudly tell tomorrow, 86,000 of us; and we have paid a million and a quarter dollars to see—what we shall see.

. . . . . .

We are in a great elongated oval, flat in the centre and rising all about, with row on row of seats, another great gallery above, running half way about the horizon, and higher still a regiment of flag poles, with a clean American flag on every one, barely seen against the black night with its stars. We have cut off the sky with arc lights: hundreds of them, blazing down upon us as we sit and wait. They are thickest and fiercest of all in the centre of the space, where stands the clean, empty "ring," a squared circle of virginal white canvas, fenced with double ropes of equal purity. It is roofed with searchlights, pointing down, cutting cleanly through the light haze of tobacco smoke which drifts on the north wind. At the four corners, just below the lamps, are clusters of huge drooping bronze lilies. They are amplifiers, lending their magic wings to the voice of the announcer, a plump middle aged gentleman who throws his arms wide, supplicating a quiet he is not to get. From the 86,000 rises a slow surf of sound. Each one contributes but a little, yet the aggregate is a tremendous volume of noise through which no amplifier can cut.

The great event which we have come to see may last but a dozen seconds; and to make sure that we have had our money's worth, we are first to be treated to a dull two hours of the same thing badly done: parody before poem, to accentuate the latter's merits.

[1] Reprinted by permission of the author and *The New Republic.*

Two boys in bathrobes have climbed into opposite corners of the ring. Half a dozen civilians, truculent and sporting in their racy-looking caps have bobbed in and bobbed out again. With one sudden jerk, all the lights are out save those above the little arena. Over the great crowd sitting in darkness runs a flicker of fireflies as match after match is lighted.

In that hot white place, the two boys are now dancing about, stripped to clean white running pants and canvas shoes. Their bodies gleam pink and soft in the blazing light; when one darts his wine red glove at the other's face it is with the motion of a kitten striking at a ball upon a string.

Between two breaths, the noise of the crowd has risen to a great high pitched shout. One boy has thrust with all his might, has caught the other on the jaw and sent him toppling to the floor. Instantly the alert referee, who has been hopping about with assiduity, bends over him, and pumps one arm up and down, with elbow stiff: The whole crowd counts with him, a crashing crescendo of sound: *"One! Two! Three! Four! Five! Six! Seven! Eight!"* Then, the pandemonium slacks a little, for he is up again, he goes on. In our absorption we make a little pool of silence so that the sound of blows is audible, like the noise of some one chopping wood far away across water.

This is all very well; but it is not what we came to see. We are here for The Battle of the Century—every real fight is the Battle of the Century, the press agent has told us so. We are here to see the Nordic race defend itself against the Latin; or if you read Sporting Expert B instead of Sporting Expert A it is white man against Indian. At the very least, it is Grizzly Bear Jack against Wild Luis, the Pampas Bull.

After interminable hours of boxing comes a quick wild commotion far off at one side. The Challenger is coming in. A phalanx of police elbows a way for him and he follows, tall, tousle-headed, in a checkered bath robe. He walks with eyes downcast, like one in meditation, perhaps in prayer. We are all at once made conscious of the alien minority among the 86,000. Ladies appear here and there, beautifully clad, waving handkerchiefs, and shouting—in Spanish, no doubt, if one could hear above the general din.

Before this acclamation has died away, a new roar, even louder.

Yonder comes Champion Jack. He also is tousled, but is bathrobeless, a white sweater across his shoulders, its collar standing up behind his head. He bobs along, brisk and efficient, a distinguished visiting surgeon, called in for a special, delicate operation. Then in a moment he is in the ring, and you see how wrong was this impression. He is a Robot, an excited Robot, bent on mischief. He dances lightly on his toes, as though he were full of springs; he wriggles his great arms and superhuman shoulders.

The ring is momentarily full of little frantic photographers, and then they scurry through the ropes and only the principal and officials are left standing in a knot in the centre. Above the tallest towers the Challenger, looking out and up across the throng to the silent stars. Certainly there is nothing about him to justify that absurd nickname. His great face is serious and anxious; but the anxiety has nothing hostile about it. It is the countenance of a small boy called up before the school to recite when he knows he is not prepared.

The brief conference is over, the officials have followed the photographers down into the feverish activity of the quadrangle where two hundred newspaper men are sending every scrap of fact over the wires to thousands of offices, while others, speaking into transmitters with painfully clear articulation, picture the scene before them for a million listeners on the radio. The lights above the spectators go out again as the monstrous, nearly naked figures advance toward one another. Your heart pumps madly in that instant as they hang upon the brink of battle. Though you care not at all which man wins or loses, yet you are caught up nevertheless in the vast emotion of the crowd. For there is drama here, despite the press agent's blurbing. These men are deciding their own fates, by means of brute strength and rather more than brute cunning. We soft civilized men, who flinch from pain, will watch these non-flinchers with a fascination in which horror is perhaps dominant, as they wade unmindful through seas of agony to the preconceived goal.

There is food here for philosophers; but no philosopher can stop for contemplation with the roar of 86,000 frenzied men and women buffeting his ears. The gladiators are at it now. Here is no such perfunctory work as we have seen earlier in the evening. These blows are meant to kill, and, by the gods! they seem likely to have that

effect. Suddenly the whole vast arena full of people is on its feet. The roar has deepened, drowning out all noise from the ring; these pink figures in their desperate dance might be the shadows of the cinematograph. Suddenly they leap apart. The Challenger is down on one knee, the solicitous referee over him, a white arm performing its inevitable pumphandle.

We all count together, while the hurt man waits, looking up under his eyebrows at his opponent. When the count reaches seven he rises and the fight goes on. In a moment he is down again—up, and down again, all in the midst of a Niagara of hoarse inarticulate sound from the rest of us. Suddenly, the roar turns to a scream: Luis the Challenger has struck Jack the Champion a mighty blow, and as he reels, has followed it up while he staggers back to the side: *left, right, left,* and then the sagging ropes have separated and the hero slips between them and headfirst into the lap of a ringside newspaperman. Before the referee has counted six, he is back again in the ring, white and frightened, tottering like one poisoned. His opponent comes at him to take advantage of the golden moment for a coup de grace; but somehow, for a reason which will be disputed for long years to come, he is unable to repeat his fearful thrust. The willingness is there; the mighty muscles are there; but the thing does not happen. A few seconds and the bell has rung. The championship, the fame and at least a million dollars have slipped from him.

While anxious helpers throw cold water in the faces of these half unconscious men, the 86,000 slump exhausted in their seats. Strangers shout to one another above the din that by God! it was the greatest round ever seen in any ring since time began. These confidences are broken off as the bell rings once more, and we leap up with the fighters as they go forward. In hardly more than an instant, we perceive that the fight is over. The Challenger is a broken man. He must now play the part, after all not unappropriate, of an ox in a bungled butchery. He is down; he is up and feebly exchanging blows; then suddenly he throws his arms abroad in desperation and sinks upon his back. So obviously does that languid form spell despair and disintegration that the ringside has clambered through the ropes before the referee has even pumped the fatal "Ten!" Admirers leap upon the Champion, who is the only one in all the throng

at all concerned about helping the broken Challenger to his feet and to his corner.

The 86,000 are roaring louder than ever, but already there is the sourness of diminuendo in it. Rapidly the avalanche of noise dwindles into a mere talking, each with his neighbor. Exultant successful bettors signal with their fingers to friends seen afar off in the crowd. Disappointed ones snarl to the empty air. As the lights go on again, an airplane grinds its way through the black sky above our heads and achieves the ultimate abomination of electric advertising signs spread forth upon the under surface of its wings.

The silver cord is loosed; we who have been one multiple-headed monster have fallen apart into human personalities once more. We have seen men act as we imagine our Cro-Magnon ancestors may have done, and now we slide hastily down the centuries to a world of taxicabs, police whistles and tonight's edition of tomorrow morning's paper. We tell each other with proud arithmetic that Jack got $2,110 for each second he was in the ring. "That's makin' money, boy!" we observe to total strangers as we elbow one another on the way out. We may have come in a mood for blood; but if so, we have had our fill of it. We are financiers, as we crowd through the passages and go our ways under the high quiet stars.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF ENGLAND[1]

William Bolitho

As to Dover, it amused us. Madame Dubois tittered at the ridiculously clean porters' uniforms, without knowing why. Her husband had convinced her for years that the English were a joke. At seven years old he heard Chocolat, the famous English clown at the Cirque Médrano, and ever since believed that the English were a gifted, comical race. They hardly missed a Sunday for years without watching the comedy of "Les Cook Touristes" on the Boulevard.

[1] Reprinted from *Leviathan* by permission of the author.

So his theory that all the race of Chocolat were humorists grew strong. Before retiring, *fortune faite*, he brought her to see London, a last joke before the serious work of cabbage-planting began.

The train passed through acres of dolls' houses, with gardens, like window boxes dropped from the skies, as amusing and innocent as an old picture book. Even the girl in the corner, who was going to teach French and learn English, cheered up when she saw those English villages. We shared our sandwiches, and threw the paper out of the window. We joked about what the man who swept those miraculous fields would say, when he found three greasy scraps of the *Matin* in his grass next morning. But as the time passed the train plunged into grey smoke. The English passengers, who had been so pleasant to each other on the boat, even apologising when they pushed, changed; their looks turned stern and cruel as they neared their homes. The once-tipped waiters grew irritable. A foreboding that lasted till the end swung through the train.

The girl in the corner, now jokes about the English had stopped, remembered this and that, and read the letters in her handbag over again and again.

So London swooped upon us with troops of porters, hard and calm, and legions of taxicabs. The old red *tacots* of the Gare du Nord are wheelbarrows beside these English cabs. One took us into the labyrinthical city.

It was a bakers' evening—as if the streets were smouldering. The air smells of soot; but for the undertang of tar it would be sickening. Everything is smudged with coal, the seats, the handles, the money, the sky. Down Victoria Street we slipped between cliffs of black stone, volcanic, all quarried into windows. The homely roar of Paris traffic was here replaced by a languishing, whispering rustle over the asphalt. Crowds walk past quickly, heads bent forward in a hurry. Slow 'buses drifted past us, balancing their top-deck crews. Their drivers wear a white coat, and sit behind a scarlet throne.

Down Piccadilly huge glass windows, behind which tiny men move and settle, like rare fishes in an aquarium. There are only two colours anywhere against the black: red and yellow. Everything is splashed with one or other; soldiers wear the one, and carry the other on the tips of their canes; shop-windows are tricked out in

both; 'buses have that livery, and here and there, like symbolic pillars, there are post-boxes the colour of arterial blood. London seems in bright commemoration for a butchery.

This is great London, we thought, step-mother of orphans, killer of strangers, the last citadel of unjust riches, where, alone in the world to-day, the rich are fearless and the poor afraid. This is the last trench of the old order, and the enemy of the new, where possession is secure, and no art, no knowledge except the making of money and inheritance. Stony city, implacable city, lonely city withdrawn from all growth, enemy of the spirit, dangerous and cruel city, squatting over treasure out of sight of the sun. This is the city that starved its poets and ruined its artists, the stronghold of feudal merchants and merchant lords: that shall stand for ever.

The passers walk hard under the lights. They clamp their lips close to get where they are going as fast as they may. Our cab is going slower and slower; we can hear everything, but no one is talking. There is no human sound in the streets. No chattering, no laughter, all arms palsied. An awe is on us. We are lost in a strange world. My couple smile no more; they are quiet, and stare and hold hands.

But when the street gulf let us see Trafalgar Square, remote and beautiful, and Nelson like a phantom in the air, above a lake of street lights, in hot dusk, and the huge shadows of buildings standing freely around, apart, like peaks flying their bags, then we forgot the rest.

London seemed to us like a holy city, burning with a slow fire, with cherubim and seraphim standing on every rooftop, awful and serene. Behind this wonder the sky was calm and pure. We turned and told each other without disappointment that this was London, this comic, cruel, heavenly place.

CARAVAN [1]

Charles Merz

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

TAKE your car beyond its accustomed haunts on a journey of exploration. The short stretch of road with its pop-stands, gas tanks, water-cans, hot dogs, ukuleles, kewpie dolls and chocolate almond bars to which you are accustomed, and of which you think as something local, is the broad and pulsing artery of a nation.

Perhaps you know the road. It begins almost anywhere, at a farm-house called Ye Willow Inne, climbs a hill and runs off willingly between two rows of brightly painted numbers on its fences, trees and posts. It is the Dixie Highway, or the Lincoln Highway, or the Lackawanna Trail; it is the Yellowstone Trail, or the Yosemite Trail, or the Roosevelt Million Dollar Highway. It is a broad avenue, and with our national talent for organization we have plastered it with good advice. It is impossible to lose one's way and difficult to lose one's life.

Over it travels, for many hours of the day, a vast company of motors. Up and down the well-protected hills, over crossroads carefully chalked for left-hand turns and past bits of roadside history done on billboards, the long procession picks its way. America is cruising. It is bumper to bumper, sometimes, for a mile—with no chance of interfering from the side-lines. Inside his gate a farmer pulls his team up short, and counts a string of seven cars before he sees a loophole in the traffic. The pace is steady, seldom-changing, just a little better than the law allows. Only rarely does the caravan slow down. Then horns toot and heads are thrust out nervously to look ahead.

Somewhere a slow-mover is holding up the line. He creeps along, deaf, dumb and blind; rebellion in his rear. More sirens blare; clutches shift; brakes bite. What is the matter up there, anyway?

[1] Reprinted from *The Great American Bandwagon*, by permission of the author and The John Day Company.

Somebody must be looking at the scenery! Doesn't that fellow know that if the rest of us don't get to Jamesport at 2:30 we won't reach Creston until after three?—and if we don't reach Creston until after three?—well, then we won't reach Smithtown by 3:45. . . . Not that there is anything special for us to do, at Smithtown. One car slips by. Another car. A third, a fourth, a fifth, a sixth. The pace picks up again.

. . . . . .

Here is a scene which can be reproduced in any corner of the country: people doing the same thing in the same way in vast numbers for the same purpose. It is not easy in any other place to observe so clearly that certain American customs have developed an uncompromising ritual. A car pulls up. There follows, in regular order, the disagreement between passengers in the front seat and passengers in the rear seat as to the brand of gasoline purchased at the last station, the dispute as to whether this new brand is the same or not the same, the corollary dispute as to whether it does or does not make the slightest difference, the descent from the car to stretch the legs, the salutation to the agent of the station, the setting of the gauge, the turning of the crank, the shaking of the hose for whatever residue remains inside.

Blindfold a man, whisk him around the continent, set him down in an unknown city, and from watching its manners for an hour he might guess its name. But put him down in front of a filling station, any filling station, and not even a sixth sense could tell him whether he was one mile from the Boston Public Library or lost on the Dakota plains.

Listen to the conversation of two travellers who have pulled up at the siphons to buy oil. They are strangers: voyagers who have met by chance and will not meet again.

The first is eating a hot dog and waiting for his change. He looks at the customer on his left, and nods. "Heading for Freeport, neighbour?"

"Freeport? Yeh, soon as I get some gas," his neighbour says. He too is eating a hot dog while his son removes the wrapper from a box of cracker jack. "Road all right?"

"Road's fair. Sand, though."

"Sand, eh?"

"Yeh, lots of sand. But sand don't make any difference to *this* car."

"No? My car neither."

"My car is great on sand."

"Yeh? My car is a bear on sand."

"Hills, too."

"Hills? Say, this car of mine goes up hills like a pig shot out of a barrel. Why, coming up a hill back there a way I passed three cars ——"

"I know. Same way with mine. Just have to touch the throttle ——"

"And distance! Say, this car is a bird for distance. Never had her out in my life but I got twenty to the gallon."

"Yeh? This car of mine'll just about get that. Nearer twenty-two, I guess. And run? Say, runs like a locomotive. Haven't had the hood up in two years, I guess."

"No? Me neither. This car of mine—Well, good luck and I'll have a look at that sand of yours. Here's my change."

As the first trail-blazers gathered around friendly fires in the wilderness, so men meet now at filling stations on the well-marked road: stopping to buy gas, light pipes, counsel each other as to roads, trade warnings about speed traps and discourse solemnly of mileage, markets, taxes, Prohibition, Congress, Coolidge, cords and years without a puncture—pausing on the threshold of a new adventure long enough to tell great tales and boast great boasts.

The filling station is a rare spot, in a country of magnificent distances, for the cross-pollination of ideas.

. . . . . .

There is constantly in progress in America a migration beside which, from the point of view of numbers, the flight of the chosen people into Egypt was a disturbance of a minor order. A few thousand people crossed the Nile. Millions cross the Mississippi. There are twenty-two million automobiles in the United States. Assume that at any given moment no more than a mere one per cent of them is on the road. That still means two hundred and twenty thousand cars forever flitting from one filling station to another, with half a million people on their backs. Where are they going, why are they speeding, what do they hope to find?

Impressions? Yes. Impressions of a never-ending road, a thousand

farms, grade-crossing signs, back axles, towns passed through at twenty miles an hour.

Thrills? Yes. Thrills of scenery worth stopping for if there were only time, of police on motorcycles masked as fellow-tourists, of gorgeous sunsets well worth watching if the top were down, of getting home, at last, without a crumpled fender.

Trophies? Yes. Trophies to bring back memories of this day of travel: postcards, toy balloons and paper bathing-girls; fresh eggs, fancy radiator caps and sea-shells with an echo.

Yet surely these are poor rewards for so much travel. Surely it is worth no man's while to drive three hundred miles from break of dawn on Sunday just to add another pennant to his string; or to scurry across country for the expressed purpose of viewing the scenery, without stopping anywhere except to change his tires; or to bring back from a point one hundred and eighty-three miles distant an impression of two dozen policemen and seven cities all alike; or to hurry half the day for the apparent purpose of arriving at a point far enough away to make it necessary to turn at once and hurry home again.

No rational explanation can suffice for wandering so purposeless. It is not a matter of reason. It is something in the blood. We are a young nation and the roving spirit is still robust in us. If we cannot rove for the purpose of settling a continent we shall at least rove for the fun of roving, for the pleasure of seeing something, or for the joy of merely having been.

Horns toot. Out on the road of pop-stands, gas tanks, water-cans, hot dogs, ukuleles, kewpie dolls and chocolate almond bars that is now the highway of a nation, one car slips past the slow-mover who is holding up the line. Another car. A third, a fourth, a fifth, a sixth. The pace picks up again.

Twilight in September. Over the hills winds the caravan, looking for something, nothing, everything. Lunches gone, lights twinkling, tonneaus full of golden-rod, America re-visited.

LICHEN[1]

John Ruskin

LICHEN, and mosses (though these last in their luxuriance are deep and rich as herbage, yet both for the most part humblest of the green things that live),—how of these? Meek creatures! the first mercy of the earth, veiling with hushed softness its dintless rocks; creatures full of pity, covering with strange and tender honor the scarred disgrace of ruin,—laying quiet finger on the trembling stones, to teach them rest. No words, that I know of, will say what these mosses are. None are delicate enough, none perfect enough, none rich enough. How is one to tell of the rounded bosses of furred and beaming green,—the starred divisions of rubied bloom, fine-filmed, as if the Rock Spirits could spin porphyry as we do glass,—the traceries of intricate silver, and fringes of amber, lustrous, arborescent, burnished through every fibre into fitful brightness and glossy traverses or silken change, yet all subdued and pensive, and framed for simplest, sweetest offices of grace? They will not be gathered, like the flowers, for chaplet or love-token; but of these the wild bird will make its nest, and the wearied child his pillow.

And, as the earth's first mercy, so they are its last gift to us. When all other service is vain, from plant and tree, the soft mosses and gray lichen take up their watch by the head-stone. The woods, the blossoms, the gift-bearing grasses, have done their parts for a time, but these do service forever. Trees for the builder's yard, flowers for the bride's chamber, corn for the granary, moss for the grave.

Yet as in one sense the humblest, in another they are the most honored of the earth-children. Unfading, as motionless, the worm frets them not, and the autumn wastes not. Strong in lowliness, they neither blanch in heat nor pine in frost. To them, slow-fingered, constant-hearted, is entrusted the weaving of the dark, eternal tapestries of the hills; to them, slow-pencilled, iris-dyed, the tender framing of their endless imagery. Sharing the stillness of the unimpassioned rock, they share also its endurance; and while the winds

[1] From *Modern Painters.*

of departing spring scatter the white hawthorn blossom like drifted snow, and summer dims on the parched meadow the drooping of its cowslip-gold,—far above, among the mountains, the silver lichen-spots rest, star-like, on the stone; and the gathering orange stain upon the edge of yonder western peak reflects the sunsets of a thousand years.

CITY SMOKE [1]

Booth Tarkington

THERE is a midland city in the heart of fair, open country, a dirty and wonderful city nesting dingily in the fog of its own smoke. The stranger must feel the dirt before he feels the wonder, for the dirt will be upon him instantly. It will be upon him and within him, since he must breathe it, and he may care for no further proof that wealth is here better loved than cleanliness; but whether he cares or not, the negligently tended streets incessantly press home the point, and so do the flecked and grimy citizens. At a breeze he must smother in whirlpools of dust, and if he should decline at any time to inhale the smoke he has the meager alternative of suicide.

The smoke is like the bad breath of a giant panting for more and more riches. He gets them and pants the fiercer, smelling and swelling prodigiously. He has a voice, a hoarse voice, hot and rapacious, trained to one tune: "Wealth! I will get Wealth! I will make Wealth! I will sell Wealth for more Wealth! My house shall be dirty, my garment shall be dirty, and I will foul my neighbor so that he cannot be clean—but I will get Wealth! There shall be no clean thing about me: my wife shall be dirty, and my child shall be dirty, but I will get Wealth!" And yet it is not wealth that he is so greedy for; what the giant really wants is hasty riches. To get these he squanders wealth upon the four winds, for wealth is in the smoke.

Not quite so long ago as a generation, there was no panting giant

[1] Reprinted from *The Turmoil* with permission of Harper & Brothers and of the author.

here, no heaving, grimy city; there was but a pleasant big town of neighborly people who had understanding of one another, being, on the whole, much of the same type. It was a leisurely and kindly place—"homelike," it was called—and when the visitor had been taken through the State Asylum for the Insane and made to appreciate the view of the cemetery from a little hill, his host's duty as Baedeker was done. The good burghers were given to jogging comfortably about in phaetons or in surreys for a family drive on Sunday. No one was very rich; few were very poor; the air was clean, and there was time to live.

But there was a spirit abroad in the land, and it was strong here as elsewhere—a spirit that had moved in the depths of the American soil and labored there, sweating, till it stirred the surface, roved the mountains, and emerged, tangible and monstrous, the god of all good American hearts—Bigness. And that god wrought the panting giant.

In the souls of the burghers there had always been the profound longing for size. Year by year the longing increased until it became an accumulated force: We must Grow! We must be Big! We must be Bigger! Bigness means Money! And the thing began to happen; their longing became a mighty Will. We must be Bigger! Bigger! Bigger! Get people here! Coax them here! Bribe them! Swindle them into coming, if you must, but get them! Shout them into coming! Deafen them into coming! Any kind of people; all kinds of people! We must be Bigger! Blow! Boost! Brag! Kill the fault-finder! Scream and bellow to the Most High: Bigness is patriotism and honor! Bigness is love and life and happiness! Bigness is Money! We want Bigness!

They got it. From all the states the people came; thinly at first, and slowly, but faster and faster in thicker and thicker swarms as the quick years went by. White people came, and black people and brown people and yellow people; the negroes came from the South by the thousands and thousands, multiplying by other thousands and thousands faster than they could die. From the four quarters of the earth the people came, the broken and the unbroken, the tame and the wild—Germans, Irish, Italians, Hungarians, Scotch, Welsh, English, French, Swiss, Swedes, Norwegians, Greeks, Poles, Russian Jews, Dalmatians, Armenians, Rumanians, Bulgarians, Servians,

Persians, Syrians, Japanese, Chinese, Turks, and every hybrid that these could propagate. And if there were no Eskimos nor Patagonians, what other human strain that earth might furnish failed to swim and bubble in this crucible?

With Bigness came the new machinery and the rush; the streets began to roar and rattle, the houses to tremble; the pavements were worn under the tread of hurrying multitudes. The old, leisurely, quizzical look of the faces was lost in something harder and warier; and a cockney type began to emerge discernibly—a cynical young mongrel, barbaric of feature, muscular and cunning; dressed in good fabrics fashioned apparently in imitation of the sketches drawn by newspaper comedians. The female of his kind came with him—a pale girl, shoddy and a little rouged; and they communicated in a nasal argot, mainly insolences and elisions. Nay, the common speech of the people showed change: in place of the old midland vernacular, irregular but clean, and not unwholesomely drawling, a jerky dialect of coined metaphors began to be heard, held together by *gunnas* and *gottas* and much fostered by the public journals.

The city piled itself high in the center, tower on tower for a nucleus, and spread itself out over the plain, mile after mile; and in its vitals, like benevolent bacilli contending with malevolent in the body of a man, missions and refuges offered what resistance they might to the saloons and all the hells that cities house and shelter. Temptation and ruin were ready commodities on the market for purchase by the venturesome; highwaymen walked the streets at night and sometimes killed; snatching thieves were busy everywhere in the dusk; while house-breakers were a common apprehension and frequent reality. Life itself was somewhat safer from intentional destruction than it was in medieval Rome during a faction war—though the Roman murderer was more like to pay for his deed—but death or mutilation beneath the wheels lay in ambush at every crossing.

The politicians let the people make all the laws they liked; it did not matter much, and the taxes went up, which is good for politicians. Law-making was a pastime of the people; nothing pleased them more. Singular fermentation of their humor, they even had laws forbidding dangerous speed. More marvelous still, they had a law forbidding smoke! They forbade chimneys to smoke and they forbade cigarettes

to smoke. They made laws for all things and forgot them immediately; though sometimes they would remember after a while, and hurry to make new laws that the old laws should be enforced—and then forget both new and old. Wherever enforcement threatened Money or Votes—or wherever it was too much bother—it became a joke. Influence was the law.

So the place grew. And it grew strong.

Straightway when he came, each man fell to the same worship:

> Give me of thyself, O Bigness:
> Power to get more power!
> Riches to get more riches!
> Give me of thy sweat that I may sweat more!
> Give me Bigness to get more Bigness to myself,
> O Bigness, for Thine is the Power and the Glory! And
> there is no end but Bigness, ever and for ever!

IV

Types of Poetry

1. Lyric Poetry

"THALATTA"

J. B. Brown

I stand upon the summit of my years.
Behind, the toil, the camp, the march, the strife,
The wandering and the desert; vast, afar,
Beyond this weary way, behold! the Sea!
The sea o'erswept by clouds and winds and wings,
By thoughts and wishes manifold, whose breath
Is freshness and whose mighty pulse is peace.
Palter no question of the dim Beyond;
Cut loose the bark; such voyage itself is rest;
Majestic motion, unimpeded scope,
A widening heaven, a current without care.
Eternity!—Deliverance, Promise, Course!
Time-tired souls salute thee from the shore.

THE SIREN'S SONG

William Browne

Steer, hither steer your wingèd pines,
  All beaten mariners!
Here lie Love's undiscover'd mines,
  A prey to passengers—
Perfumes far sweeter than the best

Which make the Phoenix' urn and nest.
  Fear not your ships,
Nor any to oppose you save our lips;
  But come on shore,
Where no joy dies till Love hath gotten more.

For swelling waves our panting breasts,
  Where never storms arise,
Exchange, and be awhile our guests:
  For stars gaze on our eyes.
The compass Love shall hourly sing,
And as he goes about the ring,
  We will not miss
To tell each point he nameth with a kiss.
  —Then come on shore,
Where no joy dies till Love hath gotten more.

MEETING AT NIGHT

Robert Browning

The gray sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, through its joys and fears,
Then the two hearts beating each to each!

THE BANKS O' DOON

Robert Burns

Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair?
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae weary, fu' o' care?
Thou'lt break my heart, thou warbling bird,
That wantons through the flowering thorn;
Thou minds me o' departed joys,
Departed—never to return.

Aft hae I roved by bonnie Doon,
To see the rose and woodbine twine;
And ilka bird sang o' its luve,
And fondly sae did I o' mine.
Wi' lightsome heart I pou'd a rose,
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree;
And my fause luver stole my rose,
But ah! he left the thorn wi' me.

REASSURANCE [1]

Emily Dickinson

'Tis so much joy! 'Tis so much joy!
If I should fail, what poverty!
And yet, as poor as I
Have ventured all upon a throw;

[1] Reprinted from *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*, by permission of Little, Brown & Company.

Have gained! Yes! Hesitated so
This side the victory!

Life is but life, and death but death!
Bliss is but bliss, and breath but breath!
And if, indeed, I fail,
At least to know the worst is sweet.
Defeat means nothing but defeat,
No drearier can prevail!

And if I gain,—oh, gun at sea,
Oh, bells that in the steeples be,
At first repeat it slow!
For heaven is a different thing
Conjectured, and waked sudden in,
And might o'erwhelm me so!

BIRCHES [1]

Robert Frost

When I see birches bend to left and right
Across the line of straighter darker trees,
I like to think some boy's been swinging them.
But swinging doesn't bend them down to stay.
Ice-storms do that. Often you must have seen them
Loaded with ice a sunny winter morning
After a rain. They click upon themselves
As the breeze rises, and turn many-colored
As the stir cracks and crazes their enamel.
Soon the sun's warmth makes them shed crystal shells
Shattering and avalanching on the snow-crust—
Such heaps of broken glass to sweep away

[1] From *Mountain Interval*, by Robert Frost. Copyright, 1916, by Henry Holt and Company.

You'd think the inner dome of heaven had fallen.
They are dragged to the withered bracken by the load,
And they seem not to break; though once they are bowed
So low for long, they never right themselves:
You may see their trunks arching in the woods
Years afterwards, trailing their leaves on the ground
Like girls on hands and knees that throw their hair
Before them over their heads to dry in the sun.

But I was going to say when Truth broke in
With all her matter-of-fact about the ice-storm
(Now am I free to be poetical?)
I should prefer to have some boy bend them
As he went out and in to fetch the cows—
Some boy too far from town to learn baseball,
Whose only play was what he found himself,
Summer or winter, and could play alone.
One by one he subdued his father's trees
By riding them down over and over again
Until he took the stiffness out of them,
And not one but hung limp, not one was left
For him to conquer. He learned all there was
To learn about not launching out too soon
And so not carrying the tree away
Clear to the ground. He always kept his poise
To the top branches, climbing carefully
With the same pains you use to fill a cup
Up to the brim, and even above the brim.
Then he flung outward, feet first, with a swish,
Kicking his way down through the air to the ground.
So was I once myself a swinger of birches;
And so I dream of going back to be.
It's when I'm weary of considerations,
And life is too much like a pathless wood
Where your face burns and tickles with the cobwebs
Broken across it, and one eye is weeping
From a twig's having lashed across it open.

I'd like to get away from earth awhile
And then come back to it and begin over.
May no fate wilfully misunderstand me
And half grant what I wish and snatch me away
Not to return. Earth's the right place for love:
I don't know where it's likely to go better.
I'd like to go by climbing a birch tree,
And climb black branches up a snow-white trunk
Toward heaven, till the tree could bear no more,
But dipped its top and set me down again.
That would be good both going and coming back
One could do worse than be a swinger of birches.

DAFFODILS

Robert Herrick

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
  You haste away so soon:
As yet the early-rising Sun
  Has not attained his noon.

  Stay, stay,
  Until the hasting day
    Has run
  But to the even-song;
And, having prayed together, we
  Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,
  We have as short a Spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay
  As you, or any thing.

We die,
As your hours do, and dry
Away
Like to the Summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

JOY OF THE HILLS [1]

Edwin Markham

I ride on the mountain-tops, I ride;
I have found my life and am satisfied.
Onward I ride in the blowing oats,
Checking the field-lark's rippling notes—
Lightly I sweep
From steep to steep:
Over my head through the branches high
Come glimpses of a rushing sky;
The tall oats brush my horse's flanks;
Wild poppies crowd on the sunny banks;
A bee booms out of the scented grass;
A jay laughs with me as I pass.

I ride on the hills, I forgive, I forget
Life's hoard of regret—
All the terror and pain
Of the chafing chain.
Grind on, O cities, grind:
I leave you a blur behind.
I am lifted elate—the skies expand:
Here the world's heaped gold is a pile of sand.
Let them weary and work in their narrow walls:

[1] By permission of the author.

I ride with the voices of waterfalls!
I swing on as one in a dream—I swing
Down the airy hollows, I shout, I sing!
The world is gone like an empty word:
My body's a bough in the wind, my heart a bird!

THE SLEEPYTOWN EXPRESS [1]

James J. Montague

Just beyond the rainbow's rim a river ripples down
Beneath a bridge, around a bend, and flows through Sleepytown—
Through Sleepytown, where goblins toil to fashion wondrous toys
And make up fascinating games for little girls and boys.
And automobiles, just the size for little hands to drive,
Await to whirl you all about as soon as you arrive.
But no one ever is allowed in Sleepytown, unless
He goes to bed in time to take the Sleepytown Express!

I know a foolish little boy who always starts to whine
When he is asked to trot upstairs before it's half-past nine.
And often he will stamp his feet and shake his tousled head,
And make a racket, even then, when he is sent to bed.
Of course, when he has said his prayers it always is too late
To catch the Sleepytown Express—it starts at half-past eight.
And so, in all his long, long life—he's five years old this fall—
That little boy has never been to Sleepytown at all.

But other wiser little boys, and little girls as well,
As soon as 8 o'clock has struck rush right upstairs, pell-mell,
Get off their clothes and say their prayers, just of their own accord,
And, when the train comes rolling in, they're there to climb aboard.
Then through a long, delightful night they wander up and down

[1] From *More Truth Than Poetry*, used by permission of Doubleday, Doran and Company.

And have a most exciting time in queer old Sleepytown;
And not for cake or anything that children could possess
Would any of them ever miss the Sleepytown Express!

THE BARREL ORGAN[1]

Alfred Noyes

There's a barrel-organ caroling across a golden street
  In the City as the sun sinks low;
And the music's not immortal; but the world has made it sweet
  And fulfilled it with the sunset glow;
And it pulses through the pleasures of the City and the pain
  That surround the singing organ like a large eternal light;
And they've given it a glory and a part to play again
  In the Symphony that rules the day and night.

And now it's marching onward through the realms of old romance,
  And trolling out a fond familiar tune,
And now it's roaring cannon down to fight the king of France,
  And now it's prattling softly to the moon.
And all around the organ there's a sea without a shore
  Of human joys and wonders and regrets;
To remember and to recompense the music evermore
  For what the cold machinery forgets.

  Yes; as the music changes,
    Like a prismatic glass,
  It takes the light and ranges
    Through all the moods that pass;
  Dissects the common carnival
    Of passions and regrets,

[1] Reprinted by permission from *Collected Poems*, Volume I, by Alfred Noyes. Copyright 1906, by Frederick A. Stokes Company.

And gives the world a glimpse of all
The colors it forgets.

And there *La Traviata* sighs
Another sadder song;
And there *Il Trovatore* cries
A tale of deeper wrong;
And bolder knights to battle go
With sword and shield and lance
Than ever here on earth below
Have whirled into—*a dance!*—

Go down to Kew in lilac time, in lilac time, in lilac time;
Go down to Kew in lilac time (it isn't far from London!)
And you shall wander hand in hand with love in summer's wonderland;
Go down to Kew in lilac time (it isn't far from London!)

The cherry-trees are seas of bloom and soft perfume and sweet perfume,
The cherry-trees are seas of bloom (and oh, so near to London!)
And there, they say, when dawn is high and all the world's a blaze of sky
The cuckoo, though he's very shy, will sing a song for London.

The Dorian nightingale is rare and yet they say you'll hear him there
At Kew, at Kew in lilac time (and oh, so near to London!)
The linnet and the throstle, too, and after dark the long halloo
And golden-eyed *tu-whit, tu-whoo*, of owls that ogle London.

For Noah hardly knew a bird of any kind that isn't heard
At Kew, at Kew in lilac time (and oh, so near to London!)
And when the rose begins to pout and all the chestnut spires are out
You'll hear the rest without a doubt, all chorusing for London:

Come down to Kew in lilac time, in lilac time, in lilac time;
Come down to Kew in lilac time (it isn't far from London!)

And you shall wander hand in hand with love in summer's wonder-land;
Come down to Kew in lilac time (it isn't far from London!)

And then the troubadour begins to thrill the golden street,
In the City as the sun sinks low;
And in all the gaudy busses there are scores of weary feet
Marking time, sweet time, with a dull mechanic beat,
And a thousand hearts are plunging to a love they'll never meet,
Through the meadows of the sunset, through the poppies and the wheat,
In the land where the dead dreams go.

Verdi, Verdi, when you wrote *Il Trovatore* did you dream
Of the City when the sun sinks low,
Of the organ and the monkey and the many-colored stream
On the Piccadilly pavement, of the myriad eyes that seem
To be litten for the moment with a wild Italian gleam
As *A che la morte* parodies the world's eternal theme
And pulses with the sunset glow?

There's a thief, perhaps, that listens with a face of frozen stone
In the City as the sun sinks low;
There's a portly man of business with a balance of his own;
There's a clerk and there's a butcher of a soft reposeful tone;
And they're all of them returning to the heavens they have known;
They are crammed and jammed in busses and—they're each of them alone
In the land where the dead dreams go.

There's a very modish woman and her smile is very bland
In the City as the sun sinks low;
And her hansom jingles onward, but her little jeweled hand
Is clenched a little tighter, and she cannot understand
What she wants or why she wanders to that undiscovered land,
For the parties there are not at all the sort of thing she planned,
In the land where the dead dreams go.

There's a rowing man that listens and his heart is crying out
  In the City as the sun sinks low;
For the barge, the eight, the Isis, and the coach's whoop and shout,
For the minute-gun, the counting and the long disheveled rout,
For the howl along the towpath and a fate that's still in doubt,
For a roughened oar to handle and a race to think about
  In the land where the dead dreams go.

There's a laborer that listens to the voices of the dead
  In the City as the sun sinks low;
And his hand begins to tremble and his face to smolder red
As he sees a loafer watching him and—there he turns his head
And stares into the sunset where his April love is fled,
For he hears her softly singing and his lonely soul is led
  Through the land where the dead dreams go.

There's an old and haggard demi-rep, it's ringing in her ears,
  In the City as the sun sinks low;
With the wild and empty sorrow of the love that blights and sears,
Oh, and if she hurries onward, then be sure, be sure she hears,
Hears and bears the bitter burden of the unforgotten years,
And her laugh's a little harsher and her eyes are brimmed with tears
  For the land where the dead dreams go.

There's a barrel-organ caroling across a golden street
  In the City as the sun sinks low;
Though the music's only Verdi, there's a world to make it sweet,
Just as yonder yellow sunset where the earth and heaven meet
Mellows all the sooty City! Hark, a hundred thousand feet
Are marching on to glory through the poppies and the wheat
  In the land where the dead dreams go.

So it's Jeremiah, Jeremiah,
  What have you to say
When you meet the garland girls
  Tripping on their way?

All around my gala hat
I wear a wreath of roses
(A long and lonely year it is
I've waited for the May!)
If anyone should ask you,
The reason why I wear it is—
My own love, my true love
Is coming home today.

And it's buy a bunch of violets for the lady
(*It's lilac time in London; it's lilac time in London!*)
Buy a bunch of violets for the lady
While the sky burns blue above.

On the other side the street you'll find it shady
(*It's lilac time in London; it's lilac time in London!*)
But buy a bunch of violets for the lady,
And tell her she's your own true love.

There's a barrel-organ caroling across a golden street
In the City as the sun sinks glittering and slow;
And the music's not immortal; but the world has made it sweet
And enriched it with the harmonies that make a song complete
In the deeper heavens of music where the night and morning meet,
As it dives into the sunset glow;
And it pulses through the pleasures of the City and the pain
That surround the singing organ like a large eternal light,
And they've given it a glory and a part to play again
In the Symphony that rules the day and night.

And there, as the music changes,
The song runs round again.
Once more it turns and ranges
Through all its joy and pain,
Bisects the common carnival
Of passions and regrets;
And the wheeling world remembers all
The wheeling song forgets.

Once more *La Traviata* sighs
Another sadder song;
Once more *Il Trovatore* cries
A tale of deeper wrong;
Once more the knights to battle go
With sword and shield and lance
Till once, once more, the shattered foe
Has whirled into—*a dance!*

Come down to Kew in lilac time, in lilac time, in lilac time;
Come down to Kew in lilac time (it isn't far from London!)
And you shall wander hand in hand with love in summer's wonderland;
Come down to Kew in lilac time (it isn't far from London!)

THE MYSTIC[1]

Cale Young Rice

There is a quest that calls me,
In nights when I am lone,
The need to ride where the ways divide
The Known from the Unknown.
I mount what thought is near me
And soon I reach the place,
The tenuous rim where the Seen grows dim
And the Sightless hides its face.

I have ridden the wind,
I have ridden the sea,
I have ridden the moon and stars.
I have set my foot in the stirrup seat

[1] From *Selected Poems and Plays* by Cale Young Rice, used by permission of The Century Company.

Of a comet coursing Mars.
And everywhere
Thro' the earth and air
My thought speeds, lightning-shod,
It comes to a place where checking pace
It cries, "Beyond lies God!"

It calls me out of the darkness,
It calls me out of sleep,
"Ride! ride! for you must, to the end of Dust!"
It bids—and on I sweep
To the wide outposts of Being,
Where there is Gulf alone—
And thro' a Vast that was never passed
I listen for Life's tone.

I have ridden the wind,
I have ridden the night,
I have ridden the ghosts that flee
From the vaults of death like a chilling breath
Over eternity.
And everywhere
Is the world laid bare—
Ether and star and clod—
Until I wind to its brink and find
But the cry, "Beyond lies God!"

It calls me and ever calls me!
And vainly I reply,
"Fools only ride where the ways divide
What is from the Whence and Why!"
I'm lifted into the saddle
Of thoughts too strong to tame
And down the deeps and over the steeps
I find—ever the same.

I have ridden the wind,
I have ridden the stars,

I have ridden the force that flies
With far intent through the firmament
And each to each allies.
And everywhere
That a thought may dare
To gallop, mine has trod—
Only to stand at last on the strand
Where just beyond lies God.

SONG

Christina G. Rossetti

When I am dead, my dearest,
  Sing no sad songs for me;
Plant thou no roses at my head,
  Nor shady cypress-tree:
Be the green grass above me
  With showers and dewdrops wet;
And if thou wilt, remember,
  And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,
  I shall not feel the rain;
I shall not hear the nightingale
  Sing on, as if in pain:
And dreaming through the twilight
  That doth not rise nor set,
Haply I may remember
  And haply may forget.

TO NIGHT

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Swiftly walk o'er the western wave,
Spirit of Night!
Out of the misty eastern cave,
Where all the long and lone daylight
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear,—
Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,
Star-inwrought!
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day;
Kiss her until she be wearied out;
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand—
Come, long-sought!

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sighed for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And moon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turned to his rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
Wouldst thou me?
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmured like a noontide bee,
Shall I nestle near thy side?
Wouldst thou me?—and I replied,
No, not thee!

Death will come when thou art dead,
Soon, too soon;
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, beloved Night,—
Swift be thine approaching flight,
Come soon, soon!

THE FIFTEEN ACRES[1]

James Stephens

I cling and swing
On a branch, or sing
Through the cool clear hush of morning O!

Or fling my wing
On the air, and bring
To sleepier birds a warning O!

That the night's in flight!
And the sun's in sight!
And the dew is the grass adorning O!

And the green leaves swing
As I sing, sing, sing:
Up by the river,
Down the dell,
To the little wee nest,
Where the big tree fell,
So early in the morning O!

[1] Reprinted from *Collected Poems* by James Stephens, by permission of The Macmillan Company.

I flit and twit
In the sun for a bit,
When his light so bright is shining O!

Or sit, and fit
My plumes, or knit
Straw plaits for the nest's nice lining O!

And she, with glee,
Shows unto me,
Underneath her wing reclining O!

And I sing that Peg,
Has an egg, egg, egg!
Up by the oat-field,
Round the mill;
Past the meadow,
Down the hill;
So early in the morning O!

I stoop and swoop
On the air, or loop
Through the trees, and then go soaring O!

To group, with a troup,
On the skiey poop,
While the wind behind is roaring O!

I skim and swim
By a cloud's red rim;
And up to the azure flooring O!

And my wide wings drip,
As I slip, slip, slip,
Down through the rain-drops,
Back where Peg
Broods in the nest

On the little white egg,
So early in the morning O!

CHORIC SONG

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

There is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful skies.
Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness?
All things have rest: why should we toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of things.

Lo! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo! sweeten'd with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,

Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days,
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life; ah, why
Should life all labour be?
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last?
All things are taken from us, and become
Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
To war with evil? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave?
All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
In silence; ripen, fall and cease:
Give us long rest or death, dark death or dreamful ease.

MY CATBIRD [1]

A CAPRICCIO

William Henry Venable

Nightingale I never heard,
Nor the skylark, poet's bird;
But there is an æther-winger
So surpasses every singer,
(Though unknown to lyric fame,)

[1] From *The Poems of William Henry Venable*, used by permission of Mr. Emerson Venable.

That at morning, or at nooning,
When I hear his pipe a-tuning,
Down I fling Keats, Shelley, Wordsworth,—
What are all their songs of birds' worth?
All their soaring
Souls' outpouring?
When my Mimus Carolinensis,
(That's his Latin name,)
When my warbler wild commences
Song's hilarious rhapsody,
Just to please himself and me!

Prime cantante!
Scherzo! Andante!
Piano, pianissimo!
Presto, prestissimo!
Hark! are there nine birds or ninety and nine?
And now a miraculous gurgling gushes
Like nectar from Hebe's Olympian bottle,
The laughter of tune from a rapturous throttle!
Such melody must be a hermit-thrush's!
But that other caroler, nearer,
Outrivalling rivalry with clearer
Sweetness incredibly fine!
Is it oriole, red-bird, or blue-bird,
Or some strange, un-Audubonèd new bird?

All one, sir, both this bird and that bird;
The whole flight are all the same catbird!
The whole visible and invisible choir you see
On one lithe twig of yon green tree.
Flitting, feathery Blondel!
Listen to his rondel!
To his lay romantical,
To his sacred canticle.
Hear him lilting!
See him tilting
His saucy head and tail, and fluttering

While uttering
All the difficult operas under the sun
Just for fun;
Or in tipsy revelry,
Or at love devilry,
Or, disdaining his divine gift and art,
Like an inimitable poet
Who captivates the world's heart,
And don't know it.
Hear him lilt!
See him tilt!

Then suddenly he stops,
Peers about, flirts, hops,
As if looking where he might gather up
The wasted ecstasy just spilt
From the quivering cup
Of his bliss overrun.
Then, as in mockery of all
The tuneful spells that e'er did fall
From vocal pipe, or evermore shall rise,
He snarls, and mews, and flies.

IT IS SPRING AND ALL IS WELL[1]

Charles Erskine Scott Wood

When wake-robin is white in shady dells
And nest-building sparrows stop a while to sing;
When flickers clack their broken bells,
It is the Spring, it is the certain Spring,
And all is well.
When hens are cackling in the straw

[1] By permission of the author.

And asparagus its bed upheaves,
When cuckoos call and black crows caw,
And swallows turn masons in the eaves;
When young hearts feel the strange earth-spell
And midday is a buzz with insect wings
And evening is tinkling with cow-bells
And barefoot boys come home, one fish on string;
It is the Spring, it is the certain Spring
And all is well.

"THE TABLES TURNED"

William Wordsworth

Up! Up! my friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you'll grow double:
Up! Up! my friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields has spread
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Misshapes the beauteous forms of things:—
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

2. Reflective Poetry

WHIM ALLEY [1]

Hervey Allen

Whim Alley once led into Danger Court
Loud with the raucous talk of cockatoos,
Where bearded Jews a-squat in alcove shops
Sat waiting like royal falcons in a mews.
Softly as rain the voweled Portuguese
Fell from their red-ripe lips with eastern news
Of galleons whose names were melodies—
Softly—between the shrieks of cockatoos.
Who cared for royal navigation laws
In Danger Court—for what the Soldan said—
Or papal lines between the east and west?
Abram out-Shylocked Isaac with applause,
And clutched the sweated dubloons to his chest,
Whose late lamented owners were scarce dead.
For there were smugglers' bargains to be made
Where leaping arches looped along the walls,
Where sunlight smoldered down the long arcade
And dizened into flame on Spanish shawls.
And what the sequin brought in Louis d'or
Was news,—and rumors passed from Trebizond,
While Rachel clinked brass anklets in a door
With a straight glimpse of blue sea just beyond.
Dark sailors passed with tang of wine and tar,
And merchants with wide hats and wider fringes,
And two black Sambos smoked the same cigar

[1] Reprinted from *Earth Moods*, by permission of Harper & Brothers.

Upon a chest with three locks and five hinges.
Vanished in air! Those arches roof a cow,
To parrots' rings the frousy hens resort;
Whim Alley leads to less than nothing now,
For only shadows dwell in Danger Court.

LIGHT

Francis Bourdillon

The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one,
Yet the light of the whole world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one,
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.

COME BACK

Arthur Hugh Clough

Come back, come back, across the flying foam,
We hear faint far-off voices call us home.

Come back, come back! And whither back and why?
To fan quenched hopes, forsaken schemes to try;
Walk the old fields; pace the familiar street;

Dream with the idlers, with the bards compete.
Come back, come back?

Come back, come back; and whither and for what?
To finger idly some old Gordian knot,
Unskilled to sunder, and too weak to cleave,
And with much toil attain to half-believe.
Come back, come back?

Come back, come back!
Back flies the foam; the hoisted flag streams back;
The long smoke wavers on the homeward track.
Back fly with winds things which the winds obey,
The strong ship follows its appointed way.

THE LISTENERS [1]

Walter De La Mare

"Is there anybody there?" said the Traveler,
Knocking on the moonlit door;
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses
Of the forest's ferny floor;
And a bird flew up out of the turret,
Above the Traveler's head;
And he smote upon the door again a second time;
"Is there anybody there?" he said.
But no one descended to the Traveler;
No head from the leaf-fringed sill
Leaned over and looked into his gray eyes,
Where he stood perplexed and still.
But only a host of phantom listeners

[1] From *Collected Poems*, used by permission of Henry Holt and Company.

That dwelt in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
To that voice from the world of men:
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,
That goes down to the empty hall,
Hearkening in an air stirred and shaken
By the lonely Traveler's call.
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
Their stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,
'Neath the starred and leafy sky;
For he suddenly smote on the door, even
Louder, and lifted his head:—
"Tell them I came," and no one answered
"That I kept my word," he said.
Never the least stir made the listeners,
Though every word he spake
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house
From the one man left awake:
Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
And the sound of iron on stone,
And how the silence surged softly backward,
When the plunging hoofs were gone.

OLD BOOKS [1]

Emily Dickinson

A precious, mouldering pleasure 't is
To meet an antique book,
In just the dress his century wore;
A privilege, I think,

[1] Reprinted from *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*, by permission of Little, Brown & Company.

His venerable hand to take,
And warming in our own,
A passage back, or two, to make
To times when he was young.

His quaint opinions to inspect,
His knowledge to unfold
On what concerns our mutual mind,
The literature of old;

What interested scholars most,
What competitions ran
When Plato was a certainty,
And Sophocles a man;

When Sappho was a living girl,
And Beatrice wore
The gown that Dante deified.
Facts, centuries before,

He traverses familiar,
As one should come to town
And tell you all your dreams were true:
He lived where dreams were born.

His presence is enchantment,
You beg him not to go;
Old volumes shake their vellum heads
And tantalize, just so.

SCIENCE AND NATURE[1]

Emily Dickinson

Arcturus is his other name,—
I'd rather call him star!
It's so unkind of science
To go and interfere!

I pull a flower from the woods,—
A monster with a glass
Computes the stamens in a breath,
And has her in a class.

Whereas I took the butterfly
Aforetime in my hat,
He sits erect in cabinets,
The clover-bells forgot.

What once was heaven, is zenith now.
Where I proposed to go
When time's brief masquerade was done,
Is mapped, and charted too!

What if the poles should frisk about
And stand upon their heads!
I hope I'm ready for the worst,
Whatever prank betides!

Perhaps the kingdom of Heaven's changed!
I hope the children there
Won't be new-fashioned when I come,
And laugh at me, and stare!

[1] From *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*, reprinted by permission of Little, Brown & Company.

I hope the father in the skies
Will lift his little girl,—
Old-fashioned, naughty, everything,—
Over the stile of pearl!

THE SOUL'S EXCLUSIVENESS [1]

Emily Dickinson

The soul selects her own society,
Then shuts the door;
On her divine majority
Obtrude no more.

Unmoved, she notes the chariot's pausing
At her low gate;
Unmoved, an emperor is kneeling
Upon her mat.

I've known her from an ample nation
Choose one;
Then close the valves of her attention
Like stone.

[1] From *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*, by permission of Little, Brown & Company.

GIVE ALL TO LOVE[1]

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Give all to love;
Obey thy heart;
Friends, kindred, days,
Estate, good-fame,
Plans, credit and the Muse,—
Nothing refuse.

'Tis a brave master;
Let it have scope:
Follow it utterly,
Hope beyond hope:
High and more high
It dives into noon,
With wing unspent,
Untold intent;
But it is a god,
Knows its own path
And the outlets of the sky.

It was never for the mean;
It requireth courage stout.
Souls above doubt,
Valor unbending,
It will reward,—
They shall return
More than they were,
And ever ascending.

Leave all for love;
Yet, hear me, yet,

[1] Reprinted by permission of, and by special arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers.

One word more thy heart behoved,
One pulse more of firm endeavor,—
Keep thee to-day,
To-morrow, forever,
Free as an Arab
Of thy beloved.

Cling with life to the maid;
But when the surprise,
First vague shadow of surmise
Flits across her bosom young,
Of a joy apart from thee,
Free be she, fancy-free;
Nor thou detain her vesture's hem,
Nor the palest rose she flung
From her summer diadem.

Though thou loved her as thyself,
As a self of purer clay,
Though her parting dims the day,
Stealing grace from all alive;
Heartily know,
When half-gods go,
The gods arrive.

VIRTUE

George Herbert

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright!
The bridal of the earth and sky—
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night;
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue angry and brave
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie,
My music shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like season'd timber, never gives;
But though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.

FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION[1]

William Dean Howells

Innocent spirits, bright, immaculate ghosts!
Why throng your heavenly hosts,
As eager for their birth
In this sad home of death, this sorrow-haunted earth?

Beware! Beware! Content you where you are,
And shun this evil star,
Where we who are doomed to die
Have our brief being, and pass, we know not where or why.

We have not to consent or to refuse;
It is not ours to choose:
We come because we must,
We know not by what law, if unjust or if just.

[1] Copyright by Harper & Brothers, August, 1895. Copyright by Mildred Howells and John Mead Howells, December, 1922.

The doom is on us, as it is on you,
That nothing can undo;
And all in vain you warn:
As your fate is to die, our fate is to be born.

ABOU BEN ADHEM

Leigh Hunt

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, like a lily in bloom,
An angel, writing in a book of gold;
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?" The vision raised its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, "The names of those who loved the Lord."
"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still; and said, "I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."
The angel wrote and vanished. The next night
It came again, with a great awakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,
And, lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

THE BRONCHO THAT WOULD NOT BE BROKEN [1]

Vachel Lindsay

A little colt—broncho, loaned to the farm
To be broken in time without fury or harm,
Yet black crows flew past you, shouting alarm,
Calling "Beware," with lugubrious singing . . .
The butterflies there in the bush were romancing,
The smell of the grass caught your soul in a trance,
So why be a-fearing the spurs and the traces,
O broncho that would not be broken of dancing?

You were born with the pride of the lords great and olden
Who danced, through the ages, in corridors golden.
In all the wide farm-place the person most human.
You spoke out so plainly with squealing and capering,
With whinnying, snorting, contorting and prancing,
As you dodged your pursuers, looking askance,
With Greek-footed figures, and Parthenon paces,
O broncho that would not be broken of dancing.

The grasshoppers cheered. "Keep whirling," they said.
The insolent sparrows called from the shed,
"If men will not laugh, make them wish they were dead."
But arch were your thoughts, all malice displacing,
Though the horse-killers came, with snake-whips advancing.
You bantered and cantered away your last chance.
And they scourged you; with Hell in their speech and their faces,
O broncho that would not be broken of dancing.

"Nobody cares for you," rattled the crows,
As you dragged the whole reaper next day down the rows.
The three mules held back, yet you danced on your toes.
You pulled like a racer, and kept the mules chasing.

[1] By permission of The Macmillan Company.

You tangled the harness with bright eyes side-glancing,
While the drunk driver bled you—a pole for a lance—
And the giant mules bit at you—keeping their places.
O broncho that would not be broken of dancing.

In that last afternoon your boyish heart broke.
The hot wind came down like a sledge-hammer stroke.
The blood-sucking flies to a rare feast awoke.
And they searched out your wounds, your death-warrant tracing.
And the merciful men, their religion enhancing,
Stopped the red reaper to give you a chance.
Then you died on the prairie, and scorned all disgraces,
O broncho that would not be broken of dancing.

ENVOI [1]

(A LITTLE WHILE)

Don Marquis

A little while the tears and laughter,
The willow and the rose;
A little while, and what comes after
No man knows.

An hour to sing, to love and linger,
Then lutanist and lute
Will fall on silence, song and singer
Both be mute.

Our gods from our desires we fashion,
Exalt our baffled lives,

[1] From *The Awakening*, reprinted by permission of Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., Publishers.

And dream their vital bloom and passion
  Still survives;

But when we're done with mirth and weeping,
  With myrtle, rue, and rose,
Shall Death take Life into his keeping?
  No man knows.

What heart hath not, through twilight places,
  Sought for its dead again
To gild with love their pallid faces?
  Sought in vain!

Still mounts the Dream on shining pinion,
  Still broods the dull distrust:
Which shall have ultimate dominion,
  Dream, or dust?

A little while with grief and laughter,
  And then the day will close;
The shadows gather . . . what comes after
  No man knows!

STRANGERS YET

R. M. Milnes, Lord Houghton

Strangers yet!
After years of life together,
After fair and stormy weather,
After travel in far lands,
After touch of wedded hands,—
Why thus joined? Why ever met,
If they must be strangers yet?

Strangers yet!
After childhood's winning ways,
After care and blame and praise,
Counsel asked and wisdom given,
After mutual prayers to Heaven,
Child and parent scarce regret
When they part—are strangers yet.

Strangers yet!
After strife for common ends—
After title of "old friends,"
After passions fierce and tender,
After cheerful self-surrender,
Hearts may beat and eyes be met,
And the souls be strangers yet.

Strangers yet!
Oh! the bitter thought to scan
All the loneliness of man:—
Nature, by magnetic laws,
Circle unto circle draws,
But they only touch when met,
Never mingle—strangers yet.

THE PRISONERS [1]

James J. Montague

The frogs are piping in the pond, the robins in the trees
Spend all the pleasant afternoon in idleness and ease,
The woodchuck ventures from his lair and dozes in the sun
Without a guilty feeling that his school work isn't done,

[1] From *More Truth Than Poetry*, reprinted by permission of Doubleday, Doran and Company.

Across the hills in shining squads the happy blackbirds wing,
No dingy school-room walls have they to shut them from the Spring.

But though the wind comes warm and soft to whisper at the door
And fresh new violets lift their heads above the forest floor,
And little hearts are all aglow, and longing to be free
And search for early blossoms with the newly wakened bee,
The prison hours drag along till four o'clock—and then—
A little play—a little sleep—then back to school again.

And when vacation time is here, with golden idle hours,
No more beside the river spring the first and fairest flowers,
The birds have left their emptied nests, the grass with dust is gray,
And gone is all the wondertime of April and of May.
And in that time how sad it was to hear the school bell ring
And know it sounded the command that summoned one from Spring.

And sadder still it is to think that in the years to be
When Spring shall call as Spring has called each year to you and me
The school will be in session still—a school of sterner hours
To prison longing hearts away from birds and bees and flowers,
For there is but one changeless rule for children and for men—
A little play—a little sleep—then back to school again!

A BUSINESS MAN'S ROMANCE [1]

Helene Mullins

He spread his wings for flight, he gallantly
  Twisted the bars one bright, courageous day,
And soared and perched upon the tallest tree
  In all the landscape; rapturous and gay,

[1] From *Earthbound*, reprinted with permission of Harper & Brothers.

He fluttered in the sun, he marvelled long
  Upon the depth and color of the sky.
Almost his soul was capable of song,
  Almost his unskilled wings had strength to fly.
But there was no security above
  The furnished cage, no dusty solid floor;
Miracles are to admire, not to love.
  He longed to hear the heavy gilded door
Slam noisily behind him, longed to feel
  The strong stern bars against his restless wings.
Though he knew well that sometime he would steal
  Again from his confinement, yet those things
Monotonous and familiar were his need.
  Not bright and bitter berries, not a bough
Swinging and bending, but the cup of seed,
  The boredom of the cage he wanted now.
And so he closed his eyes, and leaned, and fell;
  The cage won back its weary denizen
Who would believe (when he was strong and well)
  That he had dreamed, and longed to dream again.

CHICAGO [1]

Carl Sandburg

Hog Butcher for the World,
Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight Handler;
Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the Big Shoulders:
They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I have seen your painted women under the gas lamps luring the farm boys.

[1] From *Chicago Poems* by Carl Sandburg, used by permission of Henry Holt and Company.

And they tell me you are crooked and I answer: Yes, it is true I have seen the gunman kill and go free to kill again.
And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is: On the faces of women and children I have seen the marks of wanton hunger.
And having answered so I turn once more to those who sneer at this my city, and I give them back the sneer and say to them:
Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be alive and coarse and strong and cunning.
Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job, here is a tall bold slugger set vivid against the little soft cities;
Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning as a savage pitted against the wilderness,
Bareheaded,
Shoveling,
Wrecking,
Planning,
Building, breaking, rebuilding.
Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with white teeth,
Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young man laughs,
Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has never lost a battle,
Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse, and under his ribs the heart of the people,
Laughing!
Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of Youth, half-naked, sweating, proud to be Hog Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player with Railroads and Freight Handler to the Nation.

THE LAUREL AND THE CYPRESS TREE [1]

Th. Stephanides

The Laurel spake to the Cypress tree
From a garden fair, from a garden gay:
"Thou art tall but thou canst not vie with me
For the homage which to me men pay.
For my sake the wide world rings with strife,
For me men sell all which they hold dear,
For me do they barter human life,
For me do they mock at pain and fear.
For me do they rise unto the stars,
For me do they sink to the lowest hell,
For me they loose the flames of Mars—
I lure them all with my magic spell!"

The Cypress spake to the Laurel green
From a garden gray, from a garden drear:
"'Tis true that of men thou art the queen,
Of gold more worth and of life more dear.
Aye, the world for thee doth ring with strife,
All men are drawn by thy magic spell,
All men set thee as the goal of life
Amid the stars or deep down in hell.
Yet the sands run swift, the day doth dawn
When upon the brow thy green leaves fade—
By a sable stream all men are borne
To slumber sound 'neath my gloomy shade."

[1] Reprinted by permission of *The North American Review.*

BARTER [1]

Sara Teasdale

Life has loveliness to sell,
  All beautiful and splendid things,
Blue waves whitened on a cliff,
  Soaring fire that sways and sings,
And children's faces looking up
Holding wonder like a cup.

Life has loveliness to sell,
  Music like a curve of gold,
Scent of pine trees in the rain,
  Eyes that love you, arms that hold,
And for your spirit's still delight,
Holy thoughts that star the night.

Spend all you have for loveliness,
  Buy it and never count the cost;
For one white singing hour of peace
  Count many a year of strife well lost,
And for a breath of ecstasy
Give all you have been, or could be.

[1] From *Lovesongs*, reprinted through permission of The Macmillan Company.

MIRED [1]

Charles Erskine Scott Wood

Along the edge of the vast tule morass;
Stretching away toward the purple hills,
Continually, the restless cattle pass
And mutter the dumb grief that fills
Their breasts, because an old mired cow
Sends to her kind, beseeching calls.
Floundering in the black, relentless slough,
Deeper she falls.
Above, on careless, sky-free wing,
Waterfowl enjoy the watery wilderness.
Blackbirds on giant rushes lightly swing.
Around is a great loneliness.
A tongue-lolling coyote sneaking on his way
To safer plunder, eyes her feeble stir
And over his shoulder, desert-thief in grey,
Contemptuous, sniffs a wicked nose at her;
Then stealthily he prowls on through the herd.
Down from the sky, the wide-winged carrion bird.
Weak from the winter and her sucking calf,
She cannot struggle any more.
The coyote yelps a shrill demoniac laugh.
The buzzard's shadow glides along the shore.
Close to the miry edge blubbers her baby bull.
She lifts against the clammy clutch again;
One last, despairing, mighty mother-pull,
In vain—in vain.
Gnats at her eyes,
Buzzing, big blue-bottle flies.
On easy sail and slow,
Closer swings the obscene bird of death.
The horned head sinks low.
The ooze is bubbled by her breath.

[1] Reprinted from *Poems of the Ranges*, by permission of the author.

3. *Poetry Revealing Character*

UP AT A VILLA—DOWN IN THE CITY

AS DISTINGUISHED BY AN ITALIAN PERSON OF QUALITY

Robert Browning

Had I but plenty of money, money enough and to spare,
The house for me, no doubt, were a house in the city-square;
Ah, such a life, such a life, as one leads at the window there!

Something to see, by Bacchus, something to hear, at least!
There, the whole day long, one's life is a perfect feast;
While up at a villa one lives, I maintain it, no more than a beast.

Well now, look at our villa! stuck like the horn of a bull
Just on a mountain-edge as bare as the creature's skull,
Save a mere shag of a bush with hardly a leaf to pull!
—I scratch my own sometimes, to see if the hair's turned wool.

But the city, oh the city—the square with the houses!—Why?
They are stone-faced, white as a curd, there's something to take the eye!

Houses in four straight lines, not a single front awry;
You watch who crosses and gossips, who saunters, who hurries by;
Green blinds, as a matter of course, to draw when the sun gets high;
And the shops with fanciful signs which are painted properly.

. . . . . .

Ere you open your eyes in the city, the blessed church-bells begin;
No sooner the bells leave off than the diligence rattles in;
You get the pick of the news, and it costs you never a pin.

By and by there's the traveling doctor gives pills, lets blood, draws teeth;
Or the Pulcinello-trumpet breaks up the market beneath.
At the post-office such a scene-picture—the new play, piping hot!
And a notice how, only this morning, three liberal thieves were shot.
Above it, behold the Archbishop's most fatherly of rebukes,
And beneath, with his crown and his lion, some little new law of the Duke's!

. . . . . .

Noon strikes,—here sweeps the procession! our Lady borne smiling and smart
With a pink gauze gown all spangles, and seven swords stuck in her heart!
Bang-whang-whang goes the drum, *tootle-te-tootle* the fife;
No keeping one's haunches still; it's the greatest pleasure in life.

But bless you, it's dear—it's dear! fowls, wine, at double the rate.
They have clapped a new tax upon salt, and what oil pays passing the gate
It's a horror to think of. And so, the villa for me, not the city!
Beggars can scarcely be choosers; but still—ah, the pity, the pity!
Look, two and two go the priests, then the monks with cowls and sandals,
And the penitents dressed in white shirts, a-holding the yellow candles;
One, he carries a flag up straight, and another a cross with handles,
And the Duke's guard brings up the rear, for the better prevention of scandals;
Bang-whang-whang goes the drum, *tootle-te-tootle* the fife.
Oh, a day in the city-square, there is no such pleasure in life.

YOUTH AND ART

Robert Browning

It once might have been, once only:
We lodged in a street together,
You, a sparrow on the housetop lonely,
I, a lone she-bird of his feather.

Your trade was with sticks and clay,
You thumbed, thrust, patted and polished,
Then laughed, "They will see some day
Smith made, and Gibson demolished."

My business was song, song, song;
I chirped, cheeped, trilled and twittered,
"Kate Brown's on the boards ere long,
And Grisi's existence embittered!"

I earned no more by a warble
Than you by a sketch in plaster;
You wanted a piece of marble,
I needed a music-master.

We studied hard in our styles,
Chipped each at a crust like Hindoos,
For air, looked out on the tiles,
For fun, watched each other's windows.

You lounged, like a boy of the South,
Cap and blouse—nay, a bit of beard too;
Or you got it, rubbing your mouth
With fingers the clay adhered to.

And I—soon managed to find
Weak points in the flower-fence facing,

Was forced to put up a blind
And be safe in my corset-lacing.

No harm! It was not my fault
If you never turned your eye's tail up
As I shook upon E *in alt.*,
Or ran the chromatic scale up;

For spring bade the sparrows pair,
And the boys and girls gave guesses,
And stalls in our street looked rare
With bulrush and watercresses.

Why did not you pinch a flower
In a pellet of clay and fling it?
Why did not I put a power
Of thanks in a look, or sing it?

I did look, sharp as a lynx,
(And yet the memory rankles,)
When models arrived, some minx
Tripped up-stairs, she and her ankles.

But I think I gave you as good!
"That foreign fellow,—who can know
How she pays, in a playful mood,
For his tuning her that piano?"

Could you say so, and never say,
"Suppose we join hands and fortunes,
And I fetch her from over the way,
Her, piano, and long tunes and short tunes?"

No, no: you would not be rash,
Nor I rasher and something over:
You've to settle yet Gibson's hash,
And Grisi yet lives in clover.

But you meet the Prince at the Board,
I'm queen myself at *bals-paré*,
I've married a rich old lord,
And you're dubbed knight and an R. A.

Each life unfulfilled, you see;
It hangs still, patchy and scrappy:
We have not sighed deep, laughed free,
Starved, feasted, despaired,—been happy.

And nobody calls you a dunce,
And people suppose me clever:
This could but have happened once,
And we missed it, lost it forever.

THE MOTHER AT THE TELESCOPE [1]

Sarah N. Cleghorn

I saw the moons of Jupiter!
The cloth for tea was just laid on,
And toasting of the cheese begun,
When out of doors I sense a stir
And one child calling, "Wait for her!
O mother, come and see this star,
Brought down as close as lanterns are!
And round, like Earth! we knew they were;
But think! to see a rounded star!
And rounded stars look much more far!"
Apron and all I ran to share
My boy's great moment. What a night!
Frost, a new moon, sweet biting air,
And through the telescope, I swear,

[1] From *Harpers Magazine*, by permission of the author.

A fragile berry filled with light!
I saw it with these very eyes;
With such nearsighted eyes as these,
That had been watching bits of cheese,
I saw the drop of light that swung
Its four faint sailing moons along!
(The moons looked only half the size
Of scales of minnows.) "And that star
Has me transported twice as far
As Jupiter from Earth," I said;
For in my veins and in my head
Great joy and wonder blazed and shone
To think what I had gazed upon—
Moons of a planet in the skies
Seen with these kitchen-gazing eyes!

THE MAD MAID'S SONG

Robert Herrick

Good-morrow to the day so fair,
  Good-morning, sir, to you;
Good-morrow to mine own torn hair
  Bedabbled with the dew.

Good-morning to this primrose too,
  Good-morrow to each maid
That will with flowers the tomb bestrew
  Wherein my love is laid.

Ah! woe is me, woe, woe is me!
  Alack and well-a-day!
For pity, sir, find out that bee
  Which bore my love away.

I'll seek him in your bonnet brave,
I'll seek him in your eyes;
Nay, now I think they've made his grave
I' th' bed of strawberries.

I'll seek him there; I know ere this
The cold, cold earth doth shake him;
But I will go, or send a kiss
By you, sir, to awake him.

Pray hurt him not; though he be dead,
He knows well who do love him,
And who with green turfs rear his head,
And who do rudely move him.

He's soft and tender (pray take heed);
With bands of cowslips bind him,
And bring him home—but 'tis decreed
That I shall never find him!

SENCE YOU WENT AWAY [1]

James Weldon Johnson

Seems lak to me de stars don't shine so bright,
Seems lak to me de sun done loss his light,
Seems lak to me der's nothin' goin' right,
Sence you went away.

Seems lak to me de sky ain't half so blue,
Seems lak to me dat ev'thing wants you,

[1] From *The Book of American Negro Poetry*, edited by James Weldon Johnson, copyright, 1922, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

Seems lak to me that I don't know what to do,
Sence you went away.

Seems lak to me dat ev'thing is wrong,
Seems lak to me de day's jes twice es long,
Seems lak to me de bird's forgot his song,
Sence you went away.

Seems lak to me I jes can't he'p but sigh,
Seems lak to me ma th'oat keeps gittin' dry,
Seems lak to me a tear stays in ma eye,
Sence you went away.

SCHOLARS [1]

Winifred M. Letts

It is pity I have,
And that is a truth,
For the Trinity men
And the men of Maynooth.
The men of Maynooth are the like o' the rooks,
With their solemn black coats an' their serious looks.
An' the Trinity men are no better at all,
For when they're not studyin' deep in their books
Their only diversion is batting a ball,
An' that is a truth.

If myself now were there
My heart would be broke,
For the smell o' the earth
Or a whiff of peat smoke.
The weight of their learning would sure have me bet,

[1] Taken by permission from *Songs From Leinster*, by Winifred M. Letts, published by E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc.

I'd sell all their books for an old fishing net,
And pawn their professors for Danny's young horse.
Och! glory to goodness, I'd pine and I'd fret
For the mountainy wind an' the smell o' the gorse,
An' that is a truth.

It's the old ones that's there,
They'd ask a poor lad
To be searching his mind
For what knowledge he had.
For learning in poaching they'd give me small thanks,
Or for tricks to catch trout hidden under the banks.
There's much I could tell them of grouse and of hare,
But still they'd not bid me to enter their ranks,
An' faith! I'm not wishful to be with them there,
An' that is a truth.

THE DEFEATISTS [1]

Max Press

We are they whose failures breed a subtle beauty,
They whom worn flags and dying trumpets greet—
We are they who spurn the happy lips of promise
And hug the iron bosom of defeat.

We are they who clutch infinitudes and linger
Amid the wreckage of our broken dreams,
Finding return for futility and scorning,
Finding amid dark ruin some thing that gleams.

Gleams like the white shrine of pale and soul-sick pilgrims—
Reached in a night of stress and toil and storm,

[1] By permission of the author.

A glow that rims the tired eyes with wonder,
A flame at which the tired heart can warm.

We are they who find within sorrow a glamour,
Beneath all peacelessness a somber peace,
Beyond the red riot we have heard a music—
Have found a haven where all heartbreaks cease.

We have looked at Death and found her wan and beauteous,
Have looked at Life and found her cruel and mad,
We have plumbed the heart of grief and found it joyous,
Have plumbed the heart of joy and found it sad.

We are they who seek all sinking stars and banners,
And tread the perilous ways of thwarted men,
We are they who walk among all fallen towers
And rear them to the threatening skies again.

We are they whose failures breed a subtle beauty,
They whom worn flags and dying trumpets greet—
We are they who spurn the happy lips of promise
And hug the iron bosom of defeat.

ZEB KINNEY ON PROFESSORS [1]

Wilbert Snow

I don't know why I asked him what he thought
Of that peculiar brand of summer folk
Who rusticate among us three full months
Of every year. Perhaps it was that all
The other topics had been grappled with,
Or, better, paddled with, for that was no

[1] Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company.

Fit morning to be grappling anything.
The northern sun lay lovingly along
The sloping ledges on the western bank
Of that still cove where most of us had loafed
The finest mornings of our lives away,
Discussing, smoking, whittling in the sun—
Brown ledges whose soft shade reflected warmth,
And held our bodies anchored to the field,
Our legs extending downward to the shore,
A sort of no-man's-land for loafing in.
The grass around these ledges, beaten down,
Had turned from green to tawny and lay flat,
Enfolding that appeal one gets from paths
Leading from kitchen doors to pasture wells.
We sat and dozed together, rousing only
When little pollock flipped above the cove,
Or some bright burst of sunlight hit beneath
A sea-gull's wing directly overhead,
When Zeb, whose ruminations held him still
For nearly twenty minutes, straightened up
Above his favorite forty-five-degree
Extent of relaxation on the ledge,
Jabbed for a broken lath to whittle on,
Cleared out his throat, and rid himself of this:

"Well, these professors that you ask about
Who come here every year are curious.
I s'pose it takes all kinds to make a world,
And none of us should be too heavy on
A neighbor, even if he don't belong.
Of course they don't belong, that's sure enough:
The smell of herrin' bait in George's skiff
Would knock the stoutest of them galley west;
And none of them appears to be real rugged.
When they go out to hand-line cod with me
They keep a-lookin' round at birds and boats
And colors on the channel,—scursely one
Can ketch his share of cod,—and never once

Has ary one of them hauled up his sleeves
And helped me gut a fish when we rowed in.
They read the books that other people don't,
And never talk about the books they read,
Leastwise to us; and some of them go in
And pound the type-writer three times a day,
Like I would go to meals; but what they write
Not one of us hears ary word about.
I figger out they write their heavy books
For one another, not for common duffers.
They play book-lairnin' games of hide-and-seek
As we play racin' with our motor-boats
On August mornin's when the shedderin'
And weather has us all a-feelin' good.
I peeked jest out o' curiosity
At some type-written papers once up-stairs,
And found it all about the big mistake
Professor Somebody in Germany
Had made in chapter four of his big book
On quails. I don't suspect that chap could tell
An early oldsquaw from a patchhead coot.
Next thing somebody else will write a book
In which this squid will have his gills hauled out
For some mistake he's made; it's all jest like
A batch of kittens playin' with their tails.
Leastwise, that's 'bout the way I figger it.

They don't go out enough and let the sun
Beat down and make them look like other folks;
They shrink before us lobster-ketchers do;
And hate to have their children roll around
In dirt and mud, like every youngster should.
Of course they wouldn't take advice from me:
But I can see them gather barnacles
Like my old sloop out there in Lobster Cove.
When barnacles and eel-grass slow her down,
I haul her up and take the scraper to her:
That's what professors need—a good sharp scraper

To clean the rubbish off their garboards, clean
The gubber from their engine-valves and pipes,
To perk them up so they'll get back their sprawl.

Here comes one now through Amariah's field
To see how we behave when we set here
And talk the mornin' out; he'll listen to us,
And then go back and tell how quaint we be.
It takes all kinds of folks to make a world."

4. Humorous Poetry

PORTRAIT OF A GENTLEMAN [1]

Herbert Gerhard Bruncken

Ebenezer Winterfleece
Leaned against the mantelpiece
  And lit a cigarette.
  The samovar was set,
But no one poured the tea—
Yet through the candles he could see,
Between the candles flutteringly,
  Eager ladies frailly pass
  Nebulous as isinglass.
Ebenezer Winterfleece
Stroked the marble mantelpiece
  And with a rather nice alarm
  Recalled a certain person's arm.
Six candles glimmered in a row
Before a faint intaglio,
Beneath a wistful cameo
  That wasn't hanging straight.
  Someone passed a plate
Of golden macaroons—
Heaps of wrinkled moons
Matched with silver spoons.
  Every person he could see
  Blistered with gentility
  And hid behind a cup of tea.
Ebenezer Winterfleece

[1] Reprinted with the permission of *The New Yorker.*

Posed before the mantelpiece;
Saw the architectural crease
  In his trousers and his coat.
  Tenderly he cleared his throat
And arched his brows at heaven.
Dinner was at seven—
  It seemed a year or two—
  The music tasted blue.
She played with such ethereal care,
As if her harp were made of air,
As if it really wasn't there—
  While in the room the gentlemen
  Were languorous for oxygen.
Ebenezer Winterfleece
Wondered if the mantelpiece
Came from Italy or Greece.
  But it was getting late,
  So stooping by the grate
He tossed his light away—
There was no need to stay.
  But from the door he still could see,
  Between the candles flutteringly,
Eager ladies frailly pass
Nebulous as isinglass.

THE SYCOPHANTIC FOX AND THE GULLIBLE RAVEN [1]

Guy Wetmore Carryl

A raven sat upon a tree,
  And not a word he spoke, for

[1] Reprinted from *Fables for the Frivolous*, by permission of Harper & Brothers.

His beak contained a piece of Brie,
Or, maybe, it was Roquefort.
We'll make it any kind you please—
At all events it was a cheese.

Beneath the tree's umbrageous limb
A hungry fox sat smiling;
He saw the raven watching him,
And spoke in words beguiling:
"J'admire," said he, "ton beau plumage,"
(The which was simply persiflage.)

Two things there are, no doubt you know,
To which a fox is used:
A rooster that is bound to crow,
A crow that's bound to roost;
And whichsoever he espies
He tells the most unblushing lies.

"Sweet fowl," he said, "I understand
You're more than merely natty,
I hear you sing to beat the band
And Adelina Patti.
Pray render with your liquid tongue
A bit from 'Götterdämmerung.' "

This subtle speech was aimed to please
The crow, and it succeeded;
He thought no bird in all the trees
Could sing as well as he did.
In flattery completely doused,
He gave the "Jewel Song" from "Faust."

But gravitation's law, of course,
As Isaac Newton showed it,
Exerted on the cheese its force,

And elsewhere soon bestowed it.
In fact, there is no need to tell
What happened when to earth it fell.

I blush to add that when the bird
Took in the situation
He said one brief, emphatic word,
Unfit for publication.
The fox was greatly startled, but
He only sighed and answered "Tut."

The Moral is: A fox is bound
To be a shameless sinner.
And also: When the cheese comes round
You know it's after dinner.
But (what is only known to few)
The fox is after dinner, too.

THE KITCHEN CLOCK

John Vance Cheney

Knitting is the maid o' the kitchen, Milly,
Doing nothing sits the choir boy, Billy:
"Seconds reckoned, seconds reckoned,
Sixty in it.
Milly, Billy,
Billy, Milly,
Tick-tock, tock-tick,
Nick-knock, knock-nick,
Knockety-nick, nickety-knock,"—
Goes the kitchen clock.

Closer to the fire is rosy Milly,
Every whit as close and cosy, Billy:
"Time's a-flying, worth your trying;
Pretty Milly—
Kiss her, Billy!
Milly, Billy,
Billy, Milly,
Tick-tock, tock-tick,
Now—now, quick-quick!
Knockety-nick, nickety-knock,"—
Goes the kitchen clock.

Something's happened, very red is Milly,
Billy boy is looking very silly;
"Pretty misses, plenty kisses;
Make it twenty, take a plenty.
Billy, Milly,
Milly, Billy,
Right-left, left-right,
That's right, all right,
Knockety-nick, nickety-knock,"—
Goes the kitchen clock.

Weeks gone, still they're sitting, Milly, Billy;
O the winter winds are wondrous chilly!
"Winter weather, close together;
Wouldn't tarry, better marry.
Milly, Billy,
Two-one, one-two,
Don't wait, 'twon't do,
Knockety-nick, nickety-knock,"—
Goes the kitchen clock.

Winters two have gone, and where is Milly?
Spring has come again, and where is Billy?
"Give me credit, for I did it:
Treat me kindly,
Mind you wind me.

Mister Billy, Mistress Milly,
My-O, O-my,
By-by, by-by,
Nickety-knock, cradle rock,"—
Goes the kitchen clock.

BALLADE NONSECTARIAN [1]

Julia Clopton Cresap

A sparrow who lived in the eaves of a church,
And whose ideas were somewhat erratic,
Met a pigeon one day from a church o'er the way
Whose opinions were very dogmatic.

They stopped in their search for a midday repast,
And in hunting they both were astute.
And, I hate to relate, they engaged in debate
That led to a frightful dispute.

Quoth the pigeon, "I hold theological views
Considered both learned and wise,
So without more delay, I will show you today
The only straight road to the skies."

Said the sparrow, "Your effort would be unrepaid,
For I follow a different road,
And it causes me grief to hear your belief
In such a ridiculous code."

Then without more ado, I am sorry to say,
They engaged in a battle most gory,
Till each was bereft of his senses and breath,
And the curtain here falls on their story.

[1] From the *Saturday Evening Post*, used by permission of the author.

Envoy

Now a strange little bird from a blossoming tree
Had witnessed the scene with surprise,
Then with unfettered wing and a heart that could sing
He took the straight road to the skies.

ON A FAVORITE CAT, DROWNED IN A TUB OF GOLD FISHES

Thomas Gray

'Twas on a lofty vase's side
Where China's gayest art had dyed
The azure flowers that blow,
Demurest of the tabby kind
The pensive Selima, reclined,
Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared:
The fair round face, the snowy beard,
The velvet of her paws,
Her coat that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes—
She saw, and purr'd applause.

Still had she gazed, but 'midst the tide
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
The Genii of the stream:
Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue
Through richest purple, to the view
Betray'd a golden gleam.

The hapless Nymph with wonder saw:
A whisker first, and then a claw

With many an ardent wish
She stretch'd, in vain, to reach the prize—
What female heart can gold despise?
What Cat's averse to Fish?

Presumptuous maid! with looks intent
Again she stretch'd, again she bent,
Nor knew the gulf between—
Malignant Fate sat by and smiled—
The slippery verge her feet beguiled;
She tumbled headlong in!

Eight times emerging from the flood
She mew'd to every watery God
Some speedy aid to send:—
No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirr'd,
Nor cruel Tom nor Susan heard—
A favourite has no friend!

From hence, ye Beauties! undeceived
Know one false step is ne'er retrieved,
And be with caution bold:
Not all that tempts your wandering eyes
And heedless hearts, is lawful prize,
Nor all that glisters gold!

THE LADY AND THE VIOLINIST [1]

Helene Mullins

Deliberately he builds a cage
  Of glamorous music to entice
Her curious but cautious feet,
  And when she scorns her heart's advice,

[1] Reprinted from *Earthbound*, by permission of Harper & Brothers.

And lifts her skirts and daintily
  Steps in upon the shining floor,
He tiptoes softly after her,
  And softly bolts the narrow door.

She sits at ease a little while,
  Adjusts her dress and pats her hair,
And glances up and glances round,
  With an amused and gracious air.
But finally the lights become
  A bit too glaring and she grows
A little weary of the place;
  She rises and superbly throws

A heavy flower at his feet,
  And goes to learn the comedy
Of her unique imprisonment.
  Dismayed, she wanders carefully
About an unfamiliar world,
  Yet utters no sharp reprimand,
But slyly tests the golden bars,
  Until one bends beneath her hand.

Triumphantly she leaves the cage,
  And in relief at her escape
She flings before him words and smiles
  Of a peculiar, tender shape.
But though he bows in gratitude,
  He scorns the small bit of her heart
With which she half maliciously
  Attempts to pay him for his art.

DAY DREAMS [1]

Dorothy Parker

We'd build a little bungalow,
If you and I were one,
And carefully we'd plan it, so
We'd get the morning sun.
I'd rise each day at rosy dawn
And bustle gaily down;
In evening's cool, you'd spray the lawn
When you came back from town.

A little cook-book I should buy,
Your dishes I'd prepare;
And though they came out black and dry,
I know you wouldn't care.
How valiantly I'd strive to learn,
Assured you'd not complain!
And if my finger I should burn,
You'd kiss away the pain.

I'd buy a little scrubbing-brush
And beautify the floors;
I'd warble gaily as a thrush
About my little chores.
But though I'd cook and sew and scrub,
A higher life I'd find;
I'd join a little women's club
And cultivate my mind.

If you and I were one, my dear,
A model life we'd lead.
We'd travel on, from year to year,

[1] Reprinted from *Enough Rope*, by Dorothy Parker, with permission of Horace Liveright, Publisher.

At no increase of speed.
Ah, clear to me the vision of
The things that we should do!
And so I think it best, my love,
To string along as two.

THE V-A-S-E [1]

James Jeffrey Roche

From the madding crowd they stand apart,
The maidens four and the Work of Art;

And none might tell, from sight alone,
In which had Culture ripest grown—

The Gotham Million, fair to see,
The Philadelphia Pedigree,

The Boston Mind of azure hue,
Or the soulful Soul from Kalamazoo—

For all loved art in a seemly way,
With an earnest soul and a capital A.

. . . . . .

Long they worshiped; but no one broke
The sacred stillness, until up spoke

The western one from the nameless place!
Who, blushing, said, "What a lovely vase!"

Over three faces a sad smile flew,
And they edged away from Kalamazoo.

[1] By permission of Life Publishing Company.

But Gotham's haughty soul was stirred
To crush the stranger with one small word.

Deftly hiding reproof in praise,
She cries, "'Tis indeed a lovely vaze!"

But brief her unworthy triumph, when
The lofty one from the house of Penn,

With the consciousness of two grandpapas,
Exclaims, "It is quite a lovely vahs!"

And glances round with an anxious thrill,
Awaiting the word of Beacon Hill.

But the Boston Maid smiles courteouslee,
And gently murmurs, "Oh, pardon me!

"I did not catch your remark, because
I was so entranced with that charming vaws!"

AN OVERWORKED ELOCUTIONIST[1]

Carolyn Wells

Once there was a little boy, whose name was Robert Reece;
And every Friday afternoon he had to speak a piece.
So many poems thus he learned, that soon he had a store
Of recitations in his head and still kept learning more.
And now this is what happened: he was called upon one week
And totally forgot the piece he was about to speak.
His brain he cudgeled. Not a word remained within his head!
And so he spoke at random, and this is what he said:

[1] By permission of the author.

"My Beautiful, my beautiful, who standest proudly by,
It was the schooner Hesperus—the breaking waves dashed high!
Why is this Forum crowded? What means this stir in Rome?
Under a spreading chestnut tree, there is no place like home!
When freedom from her mountain height cried 'Twinkle, little star.'
Shoot, if you must, this old gray head, King Henry of Navarre!
Roll on, thou deep and dark blue castled crag of Drachenfels,
My name is Norval, on the Grampian hills, ring out, wild bells!
If you're waking, call me early, to be or not to be,
The curfew must not ring tonight! Oh, woodman, spare that tree!
Charge, Chester, Charge! On, Stanley, on! and let who will be clever!
The boy stood on the burning deck, but I go on forever!"
His elocution was superb, his voice and gestures fine;
His schoolmates all applauded as he finished the last line.
"I see it doesn't matter," Robert thought, "what words I say,
So long as I declaim with oratorical display."

THE CUMBERBUNCE [1]

Paul West

I strolled beside the shining sea,
I was as lonely as could be;
No one to cheer me in my walk
But stones and sand, which cannot talk—
Sand and stones and bits of shell,
Which never have a thing to tell.

But as I sauntered by the tide
I saw a something at my side,
A something green, and blue, and pink
And brown, and purple, too, I think.
I would not say how large it was;

[1] By permission of Life Publishing Company.

I would not venture that, because
It took me rather by surprise,
And I have not the best of eyes.

Should you compare it to a cat,
I'd say it was as large as that;
Or should you ask me if the thing
Was smaller than a sparrow's wing,
I should be apt to think you knew,
And simply answer, "Very true!"

Well, as I looked upon the thing,
It murmured, "Please, sir, can I sing?"
And then I knew its name at once—
It plainly was a Cumberbunce.

You are amazed that I could tell
The creature's name so quickly? Well,
I knew it was not a paper-doll,
A pencil or a parasol,
A tennis-racket or a cheese,
And, as it was not one of these,
And I am not a perfect dunce—
It had to be a Cumberbunce!

With pleading voice and tearful eye
It seemed as though about to cry.
It looked so pitiful and sad
It made me feel extremely bad.
My heart was softened to the thing
That asked me if it, please, could sing.
Its little hand I longed to shake,
But, oh, it had no hand to take!
I bent and drew the creature near,
And whispered in its pale blue ear,
"What! Sing, my Cumberbunce? You can!
Sing on, sing loudly, little man!"

The Cumberbunce, without ado,
Gazed sadly on the ocean blue,
And, lifting up its little head,
In tones of awful longing, said:

"Oh, I would sing of mackerel skies,
And where the sea is wet,
Of jelly-fish and conger-eels,
And things that I forget.
And I would hum a plaintive tune
Of why the waves are hot
As water boiling on a stove,
Excepting that they're not!

"And I would sing of hooks and eyes,
And why the sea is slant,
And gayly tips the little ships,
Excepting that I can't!
I never sang a single song,
I never hummed a note.
There is in me no melody,
No music in my throat.

"So that is why I do not sing
Of sharks, or whales, or anything!"

I looked in innocent surprise,
My wonder showing in my eyes.
"Then why, O, Cumberbunce," I cried,
"Did you come walking at my side
And ask me if you, please, might sing,
When you could not warble anything?"

"I did not ask permission, sir,
I really did not, I aver.
You, sir, misunderstood me, quite.
I did not ask you if I *might*.
Had you correctly understood,

You'd know I asked you if I *could.*
So, as I cannot sing a song,
Your answer, it is plain, was wrong.
The fact I could not sing I knew,
But wanted your opinion too."

A voice came softly o'er the lea.
"Farewell! my mate is calling me!"

I saw the creature disappear,
Its voice, in parting, smote my ear—
"I thought all people understood
The difference 'twixt 'might' and 'could'!"

5. Poetry in Heroic or Eloquent Mood

THE FALCONER OF GOD [1]

William Rose Benét

I flung my soul to the air like a falcon flying.
I said, "Wait on, wait on, while I ride below!
    I shall start a heron soon
    In the marsh beneath the moon—
A strange white heron rising with silver on its wings,
      Rising and crying
    Wordless, wondrous things;
The secret of the stars, of the world's heart strings,
    The answer to their woe.
Then stoop thou upon him, and grip and hold him so!"

My wild soul waited on as falcons hover.
I beat the reedy fens as I trampled past.
    I heard the mournful loon
    In the marsh beneath the moon.
And then—with feathery thunder—the bird of my desire
      Broke from the cover
    Flashing silver fire.
High up among the stars I saw his pinions spire.
    The pale clouds gazed aghast
As my falcon stoopt upon him, gript and held him fast.

My soul dropt through the air—with heavenly plunder?—
Gripping the dazzling bird my dreaming knew?
    Nay! but a piteous freight,

[1] By permission of the author and the Yale University Press.

A dark and heavy weight
Despoiled of silver plumage, its voice forever stilled,—
All of the wonder
Gone that ever filled
Its guise with glory. Oh, bird that I have killed,
How brilliantly you flew
Across my rapturous vision when first I dreamed of you!

Yet I fling my soul on high with new endeavor,
And I ride the world below with a joyful mind.
Upon a hillside or along the brink
Of streams, encounters instances
Of its eventual enterprise:
Inhabits the enclosing clay,
In rhapsody is caught away
In a great tide
Of beauty, to abide
Translated through the night and day
Of time, and by the anointing balm
Of earth to outgrow decay.

Hark in the wind—the word of silent lips!
Look where some subtle throat, that once had wakened lust,
Lies clear and lovely now, a silver link
Of change and peace!
Hollows and willows and a river-bed,
Anemones and clouds,
Raindrops and tender distances
Above, beneath,
Inherit and bequeath
Our far-begotten beauty. We are wed
With many kindred who were seeming dead.
Only the delicate woven shrouds
Are vanished, beauty thrown aside
To honor and uncover
A deeper beauty—as the veil that slips
Breathless away between a lover
And his bride.

So, by the body, may the soul surmise
The beauty of surrender, the tranquillity
I shall start a heron soon
In the marsh beneath the moon—
A wondrous silver heron its inner darkness fledges!
I beat forever
The fens and the sedges.
The pledge is still the same—for all disastrous pledges,
All hopes resigned!
My soul still flies above me for the quarry it shall find.

THE CREATION [1]

A NEGRO SERMON

James Weldon Johnson

And God stepped out on space,
And He looked around and said,
"I'm lonely—
I'll make me a world."

And as far as the eye of God could see
Darkness covered everything,
Blacker than a hundred midnights
Down in a cypress swamp.

Then God smiled,
And the light broke,
And the darkness rolled up on one side,
And the light stood shining on the other,
And God said, "That's good!"

[1] From *The Book of American Negro Poetry*, edited by James Weldon Johnson, copyright, 1922, by Harcourt, Brace and Company.

Then God reached out and took the light in His hands,
And God rolled the light around in His hands
Until He made the sun;
And He set that sun a-blazing in the heavens.
And the light that was left from making the sun
God gathered it up in a shining ball
And flung it against the darkness,
Spangling the night with the moon and stars.
Then down between
The darkness and the light
He hurled the world;
And God said, "That's good!"

Then God Himself stepped down—
And the sun was on His right hand,
And the moon was on His left;
The stars were clustered about His head,
And the earth was under His feet.
And God walked, and where He trod
His footsteps hollowed the valleys out
And bulged the mountains up.

Then He stopped and looked and saw
That the earth was hot and barren.
So God stepped over to the edge of the world
And He spat out the seven seas;
He batted His eyes, and the lightnings flashed;
He clapped His hands and the thunders rolled;
And the waters above the earth came down,
The cooling waters came down.

Then the green grass sprouted,
And the little red flowers blossomed,
The pine tree pointed his finger to the sky,
And the oak spread out his arms,
The lakes cuddled down in the hollows of the ground,
And the rivers ran down to the sea;
And God smiled again,

And the rainbow appeared,
And curled itself around His shoulder.

Then God raised His arm and He waved His hand
Over the sea and over the land,
And He said, "Bring forth! Bring forth!"
And quicker than God could drop His hand,
Fishes and fowls
And beasts and birds
Swam the rivers and the seas,
Roamed the forests and the woods,
And split the air with their wings.
And God said, "That's good!"

Then God walked around,
And God looked around
On all that He had made.
He looked at His sun,
And He looked at His moon,
And He looked at His little stars;
He looked on His world
With all its living things,
And God said, "I'm lonely still."

Then God sat down
On the side of a hill where He could think;
By a deep, wide river He sat down;
With His head in His hands,
God thought and thought,
Till He thought, "I'll make me a man!"

Up from the bed of the river
God scooped the clay;
And by the bank of the river
He kneeled Him down;
And there the great God Almighty
Who lit the sun and fixed it in the sky,
Who flung the stars to the most far corner of the night,

Who rounded the earth in the middle of His hand;
This Great God,
Like a mammy bending over her baby,
Kneeled down in the dust
Toiling over a lump of clay
Till He shaped it in His own image;

Then into it He blew the breath of life,
And man became a living soul.
Amen. Amen.

THE MAN WITH THE HOE [1]

Edwin Markham

Written after seeing Millet's world-famous painting of a brutalized toiler in the deep abyss of labor.

Bowed by the weight of centuries he leans
Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground,
The emptiness of ages in his face,
And on his back the burden of the world.
Who made him dead to rapture and despair,
A thing that grieves not and that never hopes,
Stolid and stunned, a brother to the ox?
Who loosened and let down this brutal jaw?
Whose was the hand that slanted back this brow?
Whose breath blew out the light within this brain?

Is this the Thing the Lord God made and gave
To have dominion over sea and land;
To trace the stars and search the heavens for power;
To feel the passion of Eternity?

[1] Copyrighted by the author; reprinted by his permission.

Is this the dream He dreamed who shaped the suns
And markt their ways upon the ancient deep?
Down all the caverns of Hell to their last gulf
There is no shape more terrible than this ——
More tongued with cries against the world's blind greed ——
More filled with signs and portents for the soul—
More packt with danger to the universe.

What gulfs between him and the seraphim!
Slave of the wheel of labor, what to him
Are Plato and the swing of Pleiades?
What the long reaches of the peaks of song,
The rift of dawn, the reddening of the rose?
Thru this dread shape the suffering ages look;
Time's tragedy is in that aching stoop;
Thru this dread shape humanity betrayed,
Plundered, profaned and disinherited,
Cries protest to the Powers that made the world,
A protest that is also prophecy.

O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
Is this the handiwork you give to God,
This monstrous thing distorted and soul-quencht?
How will you ever straighten up this shape;
Touch it again with immortality;
Give back the upward looking and the light;
Rebuild in it the music and the dream;
Make right the immemorial infamies,
Perfidious wrongs, immedicable woes?

O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
How will the future reckon with this Man?
How answer his brute question in that hour
When whirlwinds of rebellion shake all shores?
How will it be with kingdoms and with kings—
With those who shaped him to the thing he is—
When this dumb Terror shall rise to judge the world,
After the silence of the centuries?

THE YOUNG MOSES[1]

Don Marquis

The world was at his feet . . .
But overhead, the stars!
From Luxor's roof he saw their light on pillared Karnak fall,
And knew what gods and ghosts of monarchs
Alien to his blood
Kept guard among the shadows there . . .
While far upon the breathing plain
Hushed Memnon brooded, holding at his heart
A golden cry that trembled for the dawn . . .
Upon a temple's roof at Thebes the young Moses stood
In commune with his dream . . .

A kingdom at his feet . . .
Fostered of Pharaoh's daughter,
And a Prince in Egypt:
In statecraft, priestcraft, lifecraft, skilled:
Wise in his youth, and strong, and conscious of his powers:
Dowered with the patience and the passion that are genius:
Ambitious, favoured, subtle, sure and swift—
Already Prince in Egypt!
And later, anything he willed . . .
Fledged early, with a soaring instinct in his wings.
He mused, and for an infinite moment
All the world streamed by him in a mist . . .
Cities and ships and nations,
Temples and armies, melted to a mist and swirling past beneath the stars;
And a faint tumult filled his ears of trumpets and the clash of brazen arms,
The wind and sound of empire,

[1] Reprinted from *The Awakening and Other Poems*, with the permission of Doubleday, Doran and Company.

And he felt the mighty pulse of his own thought and will transmuted
to the tread of marching hosts
That shook the granite hills,
And saw chained kings cringe by his chariots, lion-drawn . . .
And felt himself on Seti's throne and crowned with Seti's crown,
And all earth's rhythms beating to his sense of law,
And half earth's purple blood, if so he would, poured out to dye
his robes with deeper splendour . . .
And all the iron delight of power was his . . .

This Egypt was a weapon to his hand;
This life was buoyant air, and his the eagle's plume.
For one measureless moment this vision moved and glittered,
Rushing by . . .
Master of men he knew himself; he thrilled;
There was an empire at his feet.

But overhead, a God . . .
Implacable divinity that, as he looked, was of a sudden manifest
In all the burning stars . . .
Relentless, searching spirit,
Cruel holiness that smote him with the agony of love,
Stern sweetness piercing to the soul,
Silence articulate that turned the universe to one unspoken word,
Violent serenity that plucked at his roots of being . . .
And a voice that answered him before he questioned it . . .
For one eternal instant Moses stood,
The cup of empire lifted to his lips,
And struggled with the God that is not, if we are not He . . .

And then . . . descended from the temple's roof,
And took his slow way through the shadowed town
Unto the quarter where an outcast people and oppressed
Laboured beneath the lash
And put their lives and hopes into the bricks because there was no
straw,
And cast his lot in with those sickly slaves,
To lead them, if he might, from bondage . . .

THE MEN OF OLD

R. M. Milnes, Lord Houghton

I know not that the men of old
  Were better than men now,
Of heart more kind, of hand more bold,
  Of more ingenuous brow:
I heed not those who pine for force
  A ghost of Time to raise,
As if they thus could check the course
  Of these appointed days.

Still is it true, and over-true,
  That I delight to close
This book of life self-wise and new,
  And let my thoughts repose
On all that humble happiness
  The world has since foregone—
The daylight of contentedness
  That on those faces shone!

With rights, though not too closely scanned.
  Enjoyed, as far as known—
With will, by no reverse unmanned—
  With pulse of even tone—
They from to-day and from to-night
  Expected nothing more
Than yesterday and yesternight
  Had proffered them before.

To them was life a simple art
  Of duties to be done,
A game where each man took his part,
  A race where all must run;

A battle whose great scheme and scope
They little cared to know,
Content, as men-at-arms, to cope
Each with his fronting foe.

Man *now* his Virtue's diadem
Puts on, and proudly wears—
Great thoughts, great feelings, came to them,
Like instincts, unawares:
Blending their souls' sublimest needs
With tasks of every day,
They went about their gravest deeds,
As noble boys at play.

And what if Nature's fearful wound
They did not probe and bare,
For that their spirits never swooned
To watch the misery there—
For that their love but flowed more fast,
Their charities more free,
Not conscious what mere drops they cast
Into the evil sea.

A man's best things are nearest him,
Lie close about his feet,
It is the distant and the dim
That *we* are sick to greet:
For flowers that grow our hands beneath
We struggle and aspire,—
Our hearts must die, except they breathe
The air of fresh desire.

But, brothers, who up Reason's hill
Advance with hopeful cheer—
Oh, loiter not, those heights are chill,
As chill as they are clear;
And still restrain your haughty gaze,
The loftier that ye go,

Remembering distance leaves a haze
On all that lies below.

WOULD YOU END WAR?[1]

James Oppenheim

Would you end war?
Create great Peace . . .

You rave at the war, do you?
Do you know that the war has struck in the face with a fist
A race of clerks,
And turned them to men?
The flabby boys of London died athletes at Ypres. . . .
The Lords of large estates proved in their deaths equality. . . .

Vast millions have ceased to whimper over the coffee at breakfast,
And ceased from family cowardice,
And from industrial bondage,
And now the mother gives the son she feared to release for a night's adventure,
And the man who demanded safety first leads the charge from the trenches,
And life is so real that men are ready to lose it. . . .
For in war they have found Peace:
The Peace with oneself, the being used for a great purpose,
The releasing of the spirit in the heart, and its victorious sweep in the soul,
The assertion of manhood, which means courage, hardness, discipline and adventure.

[1] From *1914 And After*, by James Oppenheim, used by permission of the Century Company.

Such is peace. . . .
But that which we call Peace?
This monstrous machine that weakens millions in factories,
This lust of money for its own sake: to swell one's social stomach
larger than one's neighbor's. . . .
This poor little personal strife and family pride,
This softness of muscle and cowardice of spirit. . . .
Is this Peace?
Is merely keeping alive, Peace?
Better the young die greatly than live weakly. . . .

Would you end war?
Create great Peace. . . .
The peace that demands all of a man,
His love, his life, his veriest self;
Plunge him in the smelting fires of a work that becomes his child,
Coerce him to be himself at all hazards: with the toil and the
mating that belong to him:
Compel him to serve. . . .
Give him a hard Peace: a Peace of discipline and justice. . . .
Kindle him with vision, invite him to joy and to adventure:
Set him to work, not to create *things*
But to create *men*:
Yea, himself.

Go, search yourself, America. . . .
Turn from the machine to man,
Build, while there is yet time, a creative Peace. . . .
While there is yet time! . . .
For if you reject great Peace,
As surely as vile living brings disease,
So surely shall your selfishness bring war.

A FAR CRY TO HEAVEN [1]

Edith Matilda Thomas

What! dost thou pray that the outgone tide be rolled back on the strand,
The flame be rekindled that mounted away from the smouldering brand,
The past-summer harvest flow golden through stubble-lands naked and sere,
The winter-gray woods upgather and quicken the leaves of last year?—
Thy prayers are as clouds in a drouth; regardless, unfruitful, they roll;
For this, that thou prayest vain things, 't is a far cry to Heaven, my soul,—
Oh, a far cry to Heaven!

Thou dreamest the word shall return, shot arrow-like into the air,
The wound in the breast where it lodged be balmed and closed for thy prayer,
The ear of the dead be unsealed, till thou whisper a boon once denied,
The white hour of life be restored, that passed thee unprized, undescried!—
Thy prayers are as runners that faint, that fail, within sight of the goal,
For this, that thou prayest fond things, 't is a far cry to Heaven, my soul,—
Oh, a far cry to Heaven!

And cravest thou fondly the quivering sands shall be firm to thy feet,
The brackish pool of the waste to thy lips be made wholesome and sweet?
And cravest thou subtly the bane thou desirest be wrought to thy good,

[1] By permission of and arrangement with Houghton Mifflin Company.

As forth from a poisonous flower a bee conveyeth safe food?
For this, that thou prayest ill things, thy prayers are an anger-rent
scroll;
The chamber of audit is closed,—'t is a far cry to Heaven, my soul,—
Oh, a far cry to Heaven!

6. A Group of Sonnets

THE DEAD [1]

Rupert Brooke

These hearts were woven of human joys and cares,
Washed marvellously with sorrow, swift to mirth,
The years had given them kindness. Dawn was theirs,
And sunset, and the colours of the earth.
These had seen movements, and heard music; known
Slumber and waking; loved; gone proudly friended;
Felt the quick stir of wonder; sat alone;
Touched flowers and furs and cheeks. And this is ended.

There are waters blown by changing winds to laughter
And lit by the rich skies, all day. And after,
Frost, with a gesture, stays the waves that dance
And wandering loveliness. He leaves a white
Unbroken glory, a gathered radiance,
A width, a shining peace, under the night.

HOW DO I LOVE THEE?

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height

[1] Used by permission of the publishers, Dodd, Mead & Company, Inc.

My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints,—I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

—*Sonnets from the Portuguese*

SINCE THERE'S NO HELP

Michael Drayton

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part,—
Nay I have done, you get no more of me;
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free;
Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of love's latest breath,
When his pulse failing, passion speechless lies,
When faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And innocence is closing up his eyes,
—Now if thou would'st, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover!

DOORS [1]

Hermann Hagedorn

Like a young child who to his mother's door
  Runs eager for the welcoming embrace,
  And finds the door shut, and with troubled face
Calls and through sobbing calls, and o'er and o'er
Calling, storms at the panel—so before
  A door that will not open, sick and numb,
  I listen for a word that will not come,
And know, at last, I may not enter more.

Silence! And through the silence and the dark
  By that closed door, the distant sob of tears
    Beats on my spirit, as on fairy shores
The spectral sea; and through the sobbing, hark!
  Down the fair-chambered corridor of years,
    The quiet shutting, one by one, of doors.

SILENCE

Thomas Hood

There is a silence where hath been no sound;
    There is a silence where no sound may be;
    In the cold grave—under the deep, deep sea,
Or in wide desert where no life is found,
Which hath been mute, and still must sleep profound,
    No voice is hushed—no life treads silently,
    But clouds and cloudy shadows wander free,

[1] By permission of The Macmillan Company.

That never spoke, over the idle ground.
But in green ruins, in the desolate walls
Of antique palaces, where Man hath been,
Though the dun fox, or wild hyæna, calls,
And owls, that flit continually between,
Shriek to the echo, and the low winds moan,
There the true Silence is, self-conscious and alone.

TO THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE CRICKET

Leigh Hunt

Green little vaulter in the sunny grass,
Catching your heart up at the feel of June,
Sole voice that's heard amidst the lazy noon,
When even the bees lag at the summoning brass;
And you, warm little housekeeper, who class
With those who think the candles come too soon,
Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune
Nick the glad, silent moments as they pass;
O sweet and tiny cousins, that belong
One to the fields, the other to the hearth,
Both have your sunshine; both, though small, are strong
At your clear hearts; and both seem given to earth
To ring in thoughtful ears this natural song—
In doors and out, summer and winter, Mirth.

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER

John Keats

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne:
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
—Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

NATURE

Henry W. Longfellow

As a fond mother, when day is o'er,
Leads by the hand her little child to bed,
Half willing, half reluctant to be led,
And leave his broken playthings on the floor,
Still gazing at them through the open door,
Nor wholly reassured and comforted
By promises of others in their stead,
Which, though more splendid, may not please him more;
So Nature deals with us, and takes away

Our playthings one by one, and by the hand
Leads us to rest so gently, that we go
Scarce knowing if we wish to go or stay,
Being too full of sleep to understand
How far the unknown transcends the what we know.

WHEN IN DISGRACE

William Shakespeare

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate;
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possest,
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on Thee—and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heavens's gate;
For thy sweet love remember'd, such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

OZYMANDIAS OF EGYPT

Percy Bysshe Shelley

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone

Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand
Half sunk, a shatter'd visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamp'd on these lifeless things,
The hand that mock'd them and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

THE BLACK VULTURE [1]

George Sterling

Aloof upon the day's immeasured dome,
He holds unshared the silence of the sky.
Far down his bleak, relentless eyes descry
The eagle's empire and the falcon's home—
Far down, the galleons of sunset roam;
His hazards on the sea of morning lie;
Serene, he hears the broken tempest sigh
Where cold sierras gleam like scattered foam.

And least of all he holds the human swarm—
Unwitting now that envious men prepare
To make their dream and its fulfillment one,
When, poised above the caldrons of the storm,
Their hearts, contemptuous of death, shall dare
His roads between the thunder and the sun.

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THE KIND WISE WORD

A. C. Swinburne

Beneath the shadow of dawn's aerial cope,
With eyes enkindled as the sun's own sphere,
Hope from the front of youth in godlike cheer
Looks Godward, past the shades where blind men grope
Round the dark door that prayers nor dreams can ope,
And makes for joy the very darkness dear
That gives her wide wings play; nor dreams that fear
At noon may rise and pierce the heart of hope.
Then, when the soul leaves off to dream and yearn,
May truth first purge her eyesight to discern
What once being known leaves time no power to appal;
Till youth at last, ere yet youth be not, learn
The kind wise word that falls from years that fall—
"Hope thou not much, and fear thou not at all."

TO SLEEP

William Wordsworth

A flock of sheep that leisurely pass by
One after one; the sound of rain, and bees
Murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky;
I've thought of all by turns, and yet do lie
Sleepless; and soon the small bird's melodies
Must hear, first uttered from my orchard trees,
And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.
Even thus last night, and two nights more I lay,

And could not win thee, Sleep! by any stealth:
So do not let me wear tonight away:
Without Thee what is all the morning's wealth?
Come, blesséd barrier between day and day,
Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health!

BY THE SEA

William Wordsworth

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free;
The holy time is quiet as a nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
The gentleness of heaven is on the Sea:
Listen! the mighty being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear child! dear girl! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouch'd by solemn thought
Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year,
And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

V

Drama

1. The Dramatic Monologue

IN AN ATELIER [1]

Thomas B. Aldrich

I pray you, do not turn your head and let your hands lie folded—so.
It was a dress like this, blood-red, that Dante liked so, long ago.
You don't know Dante? Never mind. He loved a lady wondrous fair—
His model? Something of the kind. I wonder if she had your hair!

I wonder if she looked so meek, and was not meek at all,—my dear
I want that side-light on your cheek. He loved her, it is very clear,
And painted her, as I paint you; but rather better on the whole.
Depress your chin, yes, that will do: he was a painter of the soul!

And painted portraits, too, I think, in the Inferno—rather good!
I'd make some certain critics blink if I'd his method and his mood.
Her name was—Jennie, let your glance rest there by that Majolica tray—
Was Beatrice; they met by chance—they met by chance, the usual way.

As you and I met, months ago, do you remember? How your feet
Went crinkle-crinkle on the snow adown the long gas-lighted street!
An instant in the drug store's glare you stood as in a golden frame!
And then I swore it—then and there—to hand your sweetness down to fame.

They met, and loved, and never wed—all this was long before our time;

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And though they died, they are not dead—such endless youth gives
'mortal rhyme!
Still walks the earth, with haughty mien, great Dante, in his soul's
distress;
And still the lovely Florentine goes lovely in her blood-red dress.

You do not understand at all? He was a poet; on his page
He drew her; and though kingdoms fall, this lady lives from age
to age:
A poet—that means painter too, for words are colors, rightly laid;
And they outlast our brightest hue, for ochers crack and crimsons
fade.

The poets—they are lucky ones! when we are thrust upon the shelves,
Our works turn into skeletons almost as quickly as ourselves;
For our poor canvas peels at length, at length is prized when all
is bare:
"What grace!" the critics cry, "what strength!" when neither strength
nor grace is there.

Ah, Jennie, I am sick at heart, it is so little one can do,
We talk our jargon—live for art! I'd much prefer to live for you.
How dull and lifeless colors are: you smile, and all my picture lies:
I wish that I could crush a star to make a pigment for your eyes.

Yes, child, I know I'm out of tune; the light is bad; the sky is gray;
I'll work no more this afternoon, so lay your royal robes away.
Besides, you're dreamy—hand on chin—I know not what—not in
the vein:
While I would paint Anne Boleyn, you sit there looking like Elaine.

Not like the youthful, radiant Queen, unconscious of the coming woe,
But rather as she might have been, preparing for the headsman's
blow.
I see! I've put you in a miff—sitting bolt upright, wrist on wrist.
How should you look? Why, dear as if—somehow—as if you'd just
been kissed.

THE LABORATORY

ANCIEN RÉGIME

Robert Browning

Now that I, tying thy glass mask tightly,
May gaze through these faint smokes curling whitely,
As thou pliest thy trade in this devil's-smithy—
Which is the poison to poison her, prithee?

He is with her, and they know that I know
Where they are, what they do: they believe my tears flow
While they laugh, laugh at me, at me fled to the drear
Empty church, to pray God in, for them!—I am here.

Grind away, moisten and mash up thy paste,
Pound at thy powder;—I am not in haste!
Better sit thus, and observe thy strange things,
Than go where men wait me and dance at the King's.

That in the mortar—you call it a gum?
Ah, the brave tree whence such gold oozings come!
And yonder soft phial, the exquisite blue,
Sure to taste sweetly,—is that poison too?

Had I but all of them, thee and thy treasures,
What a wild crowd of invisible pleasures!
To carry pure death in an earring, a casket,
A signet, a fan-mount, a filigree basket!

Soon, at the King's, a mere lozenge to give,
And Pauline should have just thirty minutes to live!
But to light a pastile, and Elise, with her head
And her breast and her arms and her hands, should drop dead!

Quick—is it finished? The color's too grim!
Why not soft like the phial's, enticing and dim?
Let it brighten her drink, let her turn it and stir,
And try it and taste, ere she fix and prefer!

What a drop! She's not little, no minion like me!
That's why she ensnared him: this never will free
The soul from those masculine eyes,—say, "no!"
To that pulse's magnificent come-and-go.

For only last night, as they whispered, I brought
My own eyes to bear on her so, that I thought
Could I keep them one half minute fixed, she would fall
Shrivelled; she fell not; yet this does it all!

Not that I bid you spare her the pain;
Let death be felt and the proof remain:
Brand, burn up, bite into its grace—
He is sure to remember her dying face!

Is it done? Take my mask off! Nay, be not morose;
It kills her, and this prevents seeing it close:
The delicate droplet, my whole fortune's fee!
If it hurts her, beside, can it ever hurt me?

Now, take all my jewels, gorge gold to your fill,
You may kiss me, old man, on my mouth if you will!
But brush this dust off me, lest horror it brings
Ere I know it—next moment I dance at the King's!

MY LAST DUCHESS

FERRARA

Robert Browning

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will 't please you sit and look at her? I said
"Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 't was not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps
Frà Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat:" such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed: she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 't was all one! My favor at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace—all and each

Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men,—good! but thanked
Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech—(which I have not)—to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
—E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive. Will 't please you rise? We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretence
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

THE PATRIOT

AN OLD STORY

Robert Browning

It was roses, roses, all the way,
With myrtle mixed in my path like mad:
The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,
The church-spires flamed, such flags they had,
A year ago on this very day.

The air broke into a mist with bells,
The old walls rocked with the crowd and cries.
Had I said, "Good folk, mere noise repels—
But give me your sun from yonder skies!"
They had answered, "And afterward, what else?"

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun
To give it my loving friends to keep!
Naught man could do, have I left undone:
And you see my harvest, what I reap
This very day, now a year is run.

There's nobody on the house-tops now—
Just a palsied few at the windows set;
For the best of the sight is, all allow,
At the Shambles' Gate—or, better yet,
By the very scaffold's foot, I trow.

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
A rope cuts both my wrists behind;
And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,
For they fling, whoever has a mind,
Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

Thus I entered, and thus I go!
In triumphs, people have dropped down dead.
"Paid by the world, what dost thou owe
Me?"—God might question; now instead,
'Tis God shall repay: I am safer so.

OVERHEARD [1]

IN THE MARSHES OF LONG ISLAND SOUND

Jack Clowett

"HEY, Herm. Ya gotcha safety-catch on? Well, get to row, will ya? First thing ya know the sun'll be up, the ducks'll be flyin' and we'll be out in plain sight. We'll be outta luck, Herm, if ya don't get to row. The tide's runnin' outta this here gut, hell-bent for election. We shoulda gone with it, then we wouldn'ta hadda row. We coulda coasted with the ebb tide right over into Cuff's Bunch with Mack and the rest of the gang. Where we're goin' is a better place fer birds, though. Colder'n hell, ain't it? Never mind, row—you'll get warm.

"Put the nose of that gun down in the boat, Herm. Pull that stool up on the stern or you'll lose it. Geez, it's cold, ain't it? The sun's breakin' over there in the East, see? Pretty soon you'll hear 'em honkin', then they'll begin to get up. Put a coupla shells in in case somethin' gets up. Is the safety catch on? See that buncha grass straight ahead? Well, pull like hell, we're goin' ta nose in there, Herm. Don't talk! There's libale to be a hunderd birds in there. All right, now; nose your box into them tall weeds; only first lay out them *de*coys. Yeah, right there. Hell! Don't push 'em over the side like a sacka meal. String 'em out so's they'll look somethin' like real ducks, Herm. Duck's got *some* sense, ya know. Hurry up, the sun's risin'. Hear that honkin'! It wasn't *me*, ya darn fool. What

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would I be honkin' for now? I'll honk when it's time to honk. Them's mallards, and we're goin' ta knock off a couple—only get yer sneak box up in them weeds. Farther in. There! Now get down in yer box and pull that grass over ya. Farther down. A duck can see ya a mile. Keep quiet, will ya. Where in hell's yer gun, Herm? Well, pull the grass one side and get yer gun. Ya can't get nothin' with yer gun lyin' in the bottom of the boat. Hey, there go the stools! The tide's carryin' 'em out. Shove outta them weeds and catch them stools before they float away. Caught! Well, take off yer mittens and reach in after 'em. Get *both* hands in; ya gotta untangle that sinker so's the duck'll float right side up. If a duck sees that stool upside down he'll get wise. That's it. Now shove back in them weeds and cover yourself over with that saw grass outta sight.

"Hey! Don't slap yer hands together, you'll scare the ducks, Herm. Rub 'em together—quietly. They'll warm up. Don't smoke, you'll scare the birds, Herm. I can see yer *face*! Get that grass over yer face and shoulders, fer gossake. *Who's* coughin'! Dontcha know a cough from a duck call? I'm callin' in the ducks fer ya. Hey! Don't *you* try it, you'll scare 'em. Ya gotta practice to imitate a duck. Now, get *down*! Here comes a coupla blacks. They're goin' to stool in, Herm. Be quiet now. Fire, you fool—*fire*! Hell! They're gone. Why didntcha shoot, Herm? Ya couldn't getcher mittin through the trigger guard! Fine duck hunter *you* turned—keep *quiet*! Here's three beauts —I'll take 'em, Herm. Honk, honk, honk!

"Why didn't I fire? I did, but the lousy safety-catch was on. They was *your* ducks anyway, Herm. Lucky I had the catch on—I'da shot yer ear off. Anyway, they was too far away. Have a shot, Herm? Ya don't see anything to *shoot* at? Here ya are, ya big baby—have a shot of this; it'll warm ya up. Then we'll go back to camp and see how the other lads made out—there ain't no ducks out here."

REST-CURE [1]

Patricia Collinge

I'M ALL right. Sure I am. I'm fine, I am. I've been a little nervous but I'm all right now. I'm having a rest-cure. That's what they tell me. I'm having a rest-cure and I can't see anybody. Only the doctor and the day nurse and the night nurse and the floor nurse and the head nurse and the tray boys and three or four orderlies. And all I have to do is eat and sleep and not worry about anything and rest. And that's just what I'm doing. I may not look it but that's just what I'm doing. And a hospital is just the place to do it in. No one disturbs you. Not still seven o'clock in the morning they don't. And then all they do is wash you and give you some breakfast and wash you and clean the room and then you can rest. You can till they wash the windows. And then you can rest till they want to clean the bathroom. You can rest *while* they clean the bathroom. You can. I can't. Not while hospitals use tin basins, I can't. Certainly I'm not jumpy. I'm fine. I *like* hearing tin basins banged around. And I don't mind a bit if the nurse sings while she does it. It doesn't make me nervous—it makes me sick, but it doesn't make me nervous. And after they get the floor scrubbed I can rest while they clean the rugs. . . . They'll take them outside to clean them, and that's very considerate. They understand. They know I'm resting. They'll wait till I'm asleep and bring them back and drop them beside the bed with a nice dull thud. But I don't mind. I'm fine. And then I'll get my rub and that's grand. All up and down my spine and I get sleepy again. And then the nurse tiptoes over and opens the window and tiptoes over and pulls down the shade and then she moves all the furniture and washes a few tin things and then she goes to lunch. Well, supposing she does leave the door open I can get up and shut it, can't I, I'm not *sick*, am I? I'm just in for a rest. And after I shut the door I can go fast asleep. I can till they ring the telephone. I know they have orders not to, but anyone can make mistakes. And they *have* to send up flowers. Even if there *is* a sign on the door that

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says, "Patient Sleeping," it doesn't say don't wake her, does it? I'm not complaining. After lunch I can rest. Unless the doctor comes. Well . . . I can rest when he goes. I ought to be able to. It's quiet here. It says so in the street, "Hospital Street, Quiet." There *is* a little riveting next door, but who minds that? I do, but I can't stop it, can I? And I can't stop the radios. . . . It certainly was a swell idea to put radios in a hospital. . . . I wonder who thought that up? I'd like to meet him some day and slip him a nice little kiss. But *I* don't mind them, and I don't mind the visitors across the hall. . . . They *have* to shout. That's cheering the patient up. They can't come in a hospital and let the patient think he's *sick*, can they? They have to be hearty. Sure they do. So stop biting the bed-clothes. After dinner you can rest. After dinner and after your bath and after your milk of magnesia. . . . *Then* you can rest. You aren't nervous, are you? You aren't going to let a little thing like a rest-cure upset you, are you? . . . Certainly I'm not. . . . I'm calm. . . . I'm swell. . . . I'm not screaming. . . . I'm resting.

AN HOUR BEFORE HIGH NOON[1]

Marc Connelly

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

MARCIA, go and see if anybody knows anything about those bouquets, will you, darling? Ask Schuyler. He's helping Bill get dressed. . . . I'm not going to have Cora and Gwen walk up that aisle with nothing to carry. *Please*, Marcia, *will* you go? We've only got half an hour. And phone that florist again. . . . And ask Schuyler what time it is.

. . . . . .

No, I'm *not*. I'm calmer than any of you. But we've got to know the time, haven't we? I hate the idea of sitting here all ready and

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not knowing when we're to start. I certainly don't intend to leave too soon. I don't intend to go up that aisle and find nobody there the way Bee did. Imagine going up the aisle and no preacher or groom or best man or anything there. But that *is* exactly what happened. Well, darling, I was one of the bridesmaids: I ought to be able to remember it. Because we got the signal to start from the organist so we *had* to. Certainly she waited. She just stood there, hanging on to her father's arm. We all just stood there. I thought she was going to die. It was simply ghastly.

. . . . . .

How *can* I sit down? I'm trying to get used to this damned nickel in my shoe. I don't think I can go all the way up that aisle with it grinding into me. It hurts like hell. But, darling, it's *supposed* to be under the ball of the foot. Isn't it, Frances? No, once you're dressed you can't take anything off, can you, Frances? See if it makes me limp. Did it? I know it's going to be agony.

Make Lily wake up, Gwen. She's going to ruin that hat. Darling, you are ruining that hat. Well, look at it yourself. Excuse me, but I don't think you're being extremely nervous when you're trying to keep a hat from being ruined. Well, look at it yourself, darling. Now look at Eleanor's. Keep it off, won't you, dear, if you go to sleep again?

. . . . . .

Please put that bottle away, Frances. Mama will be back in a minute. Put it under the comforter. No, I don't dare. For heaven's sake, Sally, stop crying. I know he did, darling, but don't get sentimental about it. . . . But what if he *did* actually say it? Lots of people talk like that all the time and nobody thinks anything about it. It may not be the prettiest phrase in the language but lots of nice people say it. But you'll simply *have* to face him. Eunice, tell her he didn't mean to insult her, will you, and that he loves her and is going to apologize? Now listen to Eunice, darling.

. . . . . .

Oh, Schuyler, where did you find them? But we telephoned them and they said they'd all been delivered in the one package. Why didn't they say they were making them when we telephoned? We've just been sick. Don't anybody order anything from that place again. . . . How's Bill? You *know* I don't mean how does he look. How *is*

he? I've got one too. My head's almost splitting. Did they get him very lit? Yes? Well, I heard they *did*. . . . All right. Tell him not to worry and to take some aspirin. And stay right beside him, won't you? And send Marcia back, will you? Didn't you *see* her? Oh, my goodness, we sent her to find *you*! Well, she's somewhere. All right.

. . . . . .

Well, where have *you* been? Certainly he was here. They just came in another box and Schuyler brought them up. We thought you'd got killed. Is mama still with grandma? Has she stopped crying? I wish I could make her see that it isn't a funeral. Is she coming up now? Frances, see that that bottle ——

Look, mama, the other bouquets got here in another package. Schuyler just brought them up. But I don't *want* to sit down, mama. We'll be starting in a few minutes, anyway. Please, mama, stop crying. But I do love you, mama. But I *didn't* laugh at grandma, mama. I just thought it was a funny idea for her to want to take it to church with her. Why, of course I know how she feels and I thought it was sweet of her to take something along to wish over. But I didn't know you'd given her my first tooth.

. . . . . .

But she *knows* I love her, mama. She knows I love her, doesn't she, Frances? Please tell her that, mama. No, don't let her come up here, because Bill's mother will want to come up too. Tell grandma she must keep on talking to her, because if *she* comes up she'll want to change something. She wanted to pull this veil all apart yesterday. But I *can't* humor her when she decides she wants to change things, mama. *Please*, tell grandma to keep her down there. Tell her I'll come down in five minutes. How much time have we got, mama? All right, darling. Of course I love her. All right. In five minutes.

. . . . . .

Mama's going to drive me crazy. No, and don't you take anymore, Lily. How much time have we now, Eleanor? Then maybe we'd better go down and see grandma and Bill's mother. If she suggests I change anything. . . . But, darling, she *is* that kind of a woman. Sally, please snap out of it. Use some of this powder, darling. Hello, Schuyler. Yes, I know. How do I walk, Schuyler? Well, I don't feel that way. They've got a nickel in my shoe and the damn thing's going to cripple me for life.

CHIQUITA[1]

Bret Harte

Beautiful! Sir, you may say so. Thar isn't her match in the county.
Is thar, old gal,—Chiquita, my darling, my beauty?
Feel of that neck, sir,—thar's velvet! Whoa!
Steady,—ah, will you, you vixen!
Whoa! I say. Jack, trot her out; let the gentleman look at her paces.

Morgan!—She ain't nothin' else, and I've got the papers to prove it.
Sired by Chippewa Chief, and twelve hundred dollars won't buy her.
Briggs of Tuolumne owned her. Did you know Briggs of Tuolumne?—
Busted hisself in White Pine, and blew out his brains down in 'Frisco?

Hedn't no savey—hed Briggs. Thar, Jack! that'll do,—quit that foolin'!
Nothin' to what she kin do, when she's got her work cut out before her.
Hosses is hosses, you know, and likewise, too, jockeys is jockeys;
And 'tain't ev'ry man as can ride as knows what a hoss has got in him.

Know the old ford on the Fork, that nearly got Flanigan's leaders?
Nasty in daylight, you bet, and a mighty rough ford in low water!
Well, it ain't six weeks ago that me and the Jedge and his nevey
Struck for that ford in the night, in the rain and the water all round us;

Up to our flanks in the gulch, and Rattlesnake Creek jest a-bilin',
Not a plank left in the dam, and nary a bridge on the river.
I had the gray, and the Jedge had his roan, and his nevey, Chiquita;
And after us trundled the rocks jest loosed from the top of the cañon.

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Lickity, lickity, switch, we came to the ford, and Chiquita
Buckled right down to her work, and, afore I could yell to her rider,
Took water jest at the ford, and there was the Jedge and me standing,
And twelve hundred dollars of hoss-flesh afloat, and a-driftin' to thunder!

Would ye b'lieve it? That night, that hoss, that 'ar filly, Chiquita,
Walked herself into her stall, and stood there, all quiet and dripping:
Clean as a beaver or rat, with nary a buckle of harness,
Jest as she swam the Fork,—that hoss, that ar' filly, Chiquita.

That's what I call a hoss! and—What did you say?—Oh, the nevey?
Drownded, I reckon,—leastways, he never kem back to deny it.
Ye see the derned fool had no seat, ye couldn't have made him a rider;
And then, ye know, boys will be boys, and hosses—well, hosses is hosses!

"TOMMY" [1]

Rudyard Kipling

I went into a public-'ouse to get a pint o' beer,
The publican 'e up an' sez, "We serve no red-coats here."
The girls be'ind the bar they laughed an' giggled fit to die,
I outs into the street again, an' to myself sez I:

O it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Tommy go away";
But it's "Thank you, Mister Atkins," when the band begins to play,
The band begins to play, my boys, the band begins to play,
O it's "Thank you, Mister Atkins," when the band begins to play.

[1] From *Barrack Room Ballads.*

I went into a theater as sober as could be,
They give a drunk civilian room, but 'adn't none for me;
They sent me to the gallery or round the music-'alls,
But when it comes to fightin', Lord! they'll shove me in the stalls.

For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Tommy wait outside";
But it's "Special train for Atkins," when the trooper's on the tide,
The Troopship's on the tide, my boys, the Troopship's on the tide,
But it's "Special train for Atkins," when the trooper's on the tide,

O makin' mock o' uniforms that guard you while you sleep
Is cheaper than them uniforms, an' they're starvation cheap;
An' hustlin' drunken sodgers when they're goin' large a bit
Is five times better business than paradin' in full kit.

Then it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Tommy, 'ow's yer soul?"
But it's "Thin red line of 'eroes" when the drums begin to roll,
The drums begin to roll, my boys, the drums begin to roll,
But it's "Thin red line of 'eroes" when the drums begin to roll.

We aren't no thin red 'eroes, nor we aren't no blackguards too,
But single men in barricks, most remarkable like you;
An' if sometimes our conduck isn't all your fancy paints,
Why, single men in barricks don't grow into plaster saints.

While it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Tommy fall be'ind";
But it's "Please to walk in front, sir," when there's trouble in the wind,
There's trouble in the wind, my boys, there's trouble in the wind,
But it's "Please to walk in front, sir," when there's trouble in the wind.

You talk o' better food for us, an' schools, an' fires, an' all:
We'll wait for extry rations if you treat us rational.
Don't mess about the cook-room slops, but prove it to our face
The Widow's uniform is not the soldier-man's disgrace.

For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Chuck him out, the brute!"
But it's "Saviour of 'is country" when the guns begin to shoot;
An' it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' anything you please;
An' Tommy ain't a bloomin' fool—you bet that Tommy sees!

HANDIN' HER A LINE[1]

Arthur Kober

Ain't your name Helen? Sure your name is Helen. I was just passin' by this hallways and I seen you there in the dark and I says to myself, "Why, there's Helen who I met at Harry Devlin's house," I says to myself. You don't know Harry Devlin? Say, what you tryin' to do, hand me out some kind o' line? I'm handin' *you* a line? Say, how d'ye get that way? I bet you think I'm just one of them fresh guys who passes by dark hallways and just talks to any girl they meet. Well, I certainly ain't one of them kinda guys, let me tell you.

Y'know, I still think you really are Helen, oney you don't wanna let on. Well, if you ain't her, who are you? Aw, come on. Well, I'm telling you that if I din think I met you in the first place I wouldn'a spoken to you at all. I'll tell you what let's do. I'll interdooce myself and then you interdooce yeself to me. Is that aw right? Oh, fa cryin' out loud, I tell ya I ain't in the habit of doin' it myself either, so what's good enough for one is good enough for the other.

Now my name is Charlie. What's your name? Oh, fa th' love of mud, ain't I just been tellin' you I know you're not that type? Now,

[1] Reprinted from *The New Yorker*, by permission of the author and the editors.

my name is Charlie. Alice? Say, you takin' me for a sleighride? Cross ya heart? Well, I'm pleased to meetcha, Alice. See, now we're interdooced and everythin' is jake.

Gees, I bet you're the type of a girl who thinks that if a guy kisses a girl for the first time she loses her respect. Did I say there was anythin' wrong because she thinks she loses her respect? The oney thing I'm sayin' is that I don't think it's true that she loses her respect if she lets a feller kiss her for the first time.

Of course, you're gonna think I mean somethin' personal, but what I mean to say is this. Y'see, I'm oney usin' it as an example, like. But I feel that I can kiss you and instead of you losin' any respect you'd oney be gaining by it because I figgered out like it's a state of mind. I mean, you kiss a girl and you think—now I'm not saying this about you, y'see—you think, "Oh, hell, she means nothin' in my young life." And then you meet somebody else you think you like and you think to yesself, "Gees, I'm cuckoo about her. If she would oney let me kiss her, gees, I would respect her all the more."

Well, I don't care if you are gettin' sore. Honestly, I mean it. Oh, fa cryin' out loud, can the old-maid act, will ya, and be a human bein' for oncet? I'm tellin' ya, on my word of honor, that you won't lose no respect. Now, listen to me—if I was that type of feller would I bother to be astin' ya? Well, suppose you did slap me, I'd just laugh it off—if I was that kind of feller.

There. Anythin' wrong with that? Gees, Alice, I think you're a helluva nice kid, no foolin'. Look. See. There's nothin' fresh about that, now is there? I give you my word of honor that I'm not losin' the least bit of respect for you.

Ha? Oh, you gotta date? You waitin' for him now? Oh, that's a tough break for me, aw right. Gees, just when I was beginnin' to have a good time and everythin'. Well, when can I see you? Tomorrow? You live here? Well, I'll be here tomorrow night. At this time. O.K., Alice, I'll certainly be here.

And look. I never met no Helen at Larry Devlin's house. I haven't been near Larry Devlin's house for nearly three months. I just saw you standin' in the hallways, and, kid, you just knocked me off my feet. I knew you ain't the type that lets her self be picked up, so I

makes up this story about Larry Devlin's house. Sure. Well, so long, honey.

IS SHIRLEY INSULTED?[1]

Arthur Kober

Y'KNOW, sometimes the funniest things happen to you and you stand around not knowin' if you should be insulted or not. Now you take me. For instance, in the office somethin' happened and now I dunno if I should get insulted. Why? Because I ain't sure if he tried to get fresh. If oney I was sure he tried to get fresh then I'd know he was insultin' me and I would go up and right straight to his face I would smash him one for insultin' me. Y'see, Mr. G., he took on a new man a coupla days ago—a sorta head bookkeeper. And the first day he was there he walks up to me and out of a clear sky, without no rhyme nor reason he says to me, "Good mornin', Miss Ecker." Well, y'know, there's all kindsa ways of sayin' good mornin', and I din know but what this here guy was sayin' somethin' that was like a crack. Y'know, sorta nasty like. So I din say nothin' to show him where he got off at.

Then when I was leavin' the office he was goin' down the elevator and he takes his hat off. He was puttin' on the ritz to see if he could get in good with me. No! That's just it. If he was han'some or, y'know, a snappy dresser, I wouldn't mind, but he ain't the lease bit good-lookin'. I wonder where he thinks he's gonna get off at anyhow. I ast him, just for the fun of it, if he was a college boy. Bein' as how he's the head bookkeeper—he says he's an accountant but that's a lotta applesauce because all he is is really a bookkeeper when you get right down to it. It's like me. For instance, when they ast me what I am I always say, "I'm a secatary," insteada sayin' a ste-nog'apher, because secatary is more ritzy like. Well, anyways I thought maybe he's a college boy who graduated a bookkeepin'

[1] Reprinted from *The New Yorker* by permission of the author and the editors.

course at some college. I thought maybe he had a fraternity pin like Mervyn. Mervyn, he's an accountant from N.Y.U. and he promised me his fraternity pin as soon as he gets it back. I think Dora Kaplan in the Underwear and Knitted took it from him but he's gonna get it back. So anyway I ast him what college he graduated and then he says to me he ain't no college boy. He took up accountancy he said at a business school because he was always inclined along the lines of figurin'. Yeah. I don't see how some people got the nerve to stand there and think they can get away with puttin' on a classy line of talk to make you think they're college boys when they ain't even college boys. They got their nerve, I'll say that much for them.

But the worst part of it was that this fresh feller—y'see, I don't even know his name. Mr. Miller, I think. Well, this here Mr. Miller, he goes downstairs to the sodar fountain and there I am sittin' down and eatin' a tamater-and-lettuce on rye. Well, with all them stools in that sodar-fountain place do you think he'd sit some place else besides alongside a me? No! He asts me if I mind if he sits down next to me. "Say," I says to him, "this is a free country, ain't it? Can I help it who sits down next to me?" For my part he coulda sat on the floor for all I cared where he sat.

And then he starts in talkin' high-brow. Say, has he got some line of talk! He wantsa make a hit with me so he starts in with his line of talk. He asts me if I read "Loose Ladies." I had a good mind to smash him one, oney I wasn't sure if it was a crack, y'see. He tries to tell me it's a book, and I know it's a crack oney I think that if it's a book he'll think he's puttin' somethin' over, so I din say nothin'.

Well, when we was leavin' he tries to pay for my check. "Listen," I says to him, "you don't pay no check for me. You din invite me out to lunch," I says, "and I don't see no reason why you should pay the check." I felt like givin' him a piece a my mind to show him where he gets off at. I says to him, "D'ye think I'd order oney a tamater-and-lettuce on rye if I was gonna let you take me to lunch?" I says to him. Y'see, I thought I'd kinder kid him along, too, w'ile I was at it to show him that two could play at that game as well as one can play at it. Well, one thing led to another and he's gonna take me to Schrafft's tomorrow just to find out what I would order.

Y'know, there's oney one reason I'm stringin' him along. I just wanna see, for the fun of it, how far he'll go. I dunno yet if I should feel insulted, but the minute he says somethin' that's a crack, I'll certainly lace it into him. Say, waddaye know? I made him buy a dollar's worth of raffle tickets for the silver cup for the raffle that Mervyn's fraternity house is runnin'. If Mervyn don't get that fraternity pin back from Dora Kaplan after all I'm doin' for him, believe me, I'll get good and sore.

PATTERNS [1]

Amy Lowell

I walk down the garden paths,
And all the daffodils
Are blowing, and the bright blue squills.
I walk down the patterned garden paths
In my stiff, brocaded gown.

With my powdered hair and jeweled fan,
I, too, am a rare
Pattern. As I wander down
The garden paths.
My dress is richly figured,
And the train
Makes a pink and silver stain
On the gravel, and the thrift
Of the borders.
Just a plate of current fashion,
Tripping by in high-heeled, ribboned shoes.
Not a softness anywhere about,
Only whalebone and brocade.
And I sink on a seat in the shade

[1] Reprinted by permission of, and by arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Company.

Of a lime tree. For my passion
Wars against the stiff brocade.
The daffodils and squills
Flutter in the breeze
As they please.
And I weep;
For the lime tree is in blossom
And one small flower has dropped upon my bosom.
And the plashing of waterdrops
In the marble fountain
Comes down the garden paths.
The dripping never stops.
Underneath my stiffened gown
Is the softness of a woman bathing in a marble basin,
A basin in the midst of hedges grown
So thick she cannot see her lover hiding,
But she guesses he is near,
And the sliding of the water
Seems the stroking of a dear
Hand upon her.
What is summer in a fine brocaded gown!
I should like to see it lying in a heap upon the ground.
All the pink and silver crumpled up on the ground.

I would be the pink and silver as I ran along the paths,
And he would stumble after,
Bewildered by my laughter.
I should see the sun flashing from his sword hilt and the buckles on his shoes.
I would choose
To lead him in a maze along the patterned paths,
A bright and laughing maze for my heavy-booted lover,
Till he caught me in the shade,
And the buttons of his waistcoat bruised my body as he clasped me,
Aching, melting, unafraid.
With the shadows of the leaves and the sundrops,
And the plopping of the waterdrops,
All about us in the open afternoon—

I am very like to swoon
With the weight of this brocade,
For the sun sifts through the shade.

Underneath the fallen blossom
In my bosom,
Is a letter I have hid.
It was brought to me this morning by a rider from the Duke.
"Madam, we regret to inform you that Lord Hartwell
Died in action Thursday se'nnight."
As I read it in the white, morning sunlight,
The letters squirmed like snakes.
"Any answer, Madam?" said my footman.
"No," I told him.
"See that the messenger takes some refreshment.
No, no answer."
And I walked into the garden,
Up and down the patterned paths,
In my stiff, correct brocade.
The blue and yellow flowers stood up proudly in the sun,
Each one.
I stood upright too,
Held rigid to the pattern
By the stiffness of my gown.
Up and down I walked,
Up and down.

In a month he would have been my husband.
In a month, here, underneath this lime,
We would have broke the pattern;
He for me, and I for him,
He as Colonel, I as Lady,
On this shady seat.
He had a whim
That sunlight carried blessing.
And I answered, "It shall be as you have said."
Now he is dead.

In Summer and in Winter I shall walk
Up and down
The patterned garden paths
In my stiff brocaded gown.
The squills and daffodils
Will give place to pillared roses, and to asters, and to snow.
I shall go
Up and down,
In my gown,
Gorgeously arrayed,
Boned and stayed.
And the softness of my body will be guarded from embrace
By each button, hook, and lace.
For the man who should loose me is dead,
Fighting with the Duke in Flanders,
In a pattern called a war.
Christ! What are patterns for?

LITTLE-CARIBOU MAKES "BIG TALK" [1]

Lew Sarett

To be read brokenly in a high-pitched voice with a touch of querulousness and petulance, and an occasional note of drollery.

Boo-zhóo! Boo-zhóo!
Me, Áh-deek-kóons, I mak-um big talk.
Me, ol' man; I'm got-um sick on knee
In rainy wedder w'en I'm walk. Ugh!
Me, lak moose w'at's ol',
I'm drop-um plenty toot'!
Yet I am big man! Ho!
An' I am talk-um big! Ho!

(Hi-yee Blow lak moose, ol' man!
Ho! Ho!

[1] Reprinted from *Many Many Moons*, by Lew Sarett, by permission of Henry Holt and Company.

Hi-yi! Little-Caribou him talk
Lak O-mah-kah-kée, dose Bullfrog:
Big mout', big belly,
No can fight!)

Ugh! Close mout', young crazy buck!
You stop-um council-talk,
You go 'way council!
Sit wit' squaw!
You lak little poh-tóong,
Lak pollywog tad-pole:
No can jump-um
Over little piece mud;
Can only shake-um tail
Lak crazy-dam-fool! . . .

Keétch-ie O-gi-má, Big Preshiden',
He got-um plenty t'oughts in head;
Me, Caribou, I'm got-um plenty-good t'oughts,
Got-um plenty-good t'oughts in head.
Yet Eenzhun-Agent all-tam' saying:
"Ah-deek-kóons, he crazy ol' fool!"
Ugh! *He* crazy ol' fool!

Keétch-ie O-gi-má long tam' ago
Was say in Pine Point Treaty:
"All de 'Cheebway should be farmer;
All will get from Washin'ton gov'ment
Good allotment farm land,
One hondred-sixty acre each." Ho!
Ho! Eenzhun scratch-um treaty!
Stick-um t'umb on treaty!

W'at's come treaty? Hah?
Eenzhun got-um hondred-sixty acre,
But got-um too much little pieces,—
Pieces scattered over lake
Lak leaves she's blow by wind.

In tam'rack swamp by Moose Tail Bay
He got-um forty acre piece.
Ten mile away, on Lake of Cut-Foot Sioux,
In múish-kaig an' in rice-field,
He got-um forty acre more.
On Bowstring Lake, she's t'orty-mile away,
In sand and pickerel weed,
He got-um forty acre more.
Hondred mile away, on Lac La Croix,
W'ere lumberman is mak' big dam
For drive-um log,—an' back-um up water
All over Eenzhun allotment land,—
He got-um forty acre more,—all under lake!
How can Eenzhun be good farmer! Ugh?
He's got-um land all over lake!
He's got-um land all under lake!
For Eenzhun be good farmer
Eenzhun should be good for walking under water!
Should he plow hees land wit' clam-drag!
Should he gadder potato crops wit' fish-net!
For Eenzhun be good farmer
Eenzhun should be fish!
Ugh!

I have said it!

(Ho! Ho! Ho!
Hi! Hi! Plenty-big talk!
How!)

"MAME" [1]

John V. A. Weaver

I s'pose I was a dumb-bell. That's what Mame said,
Least wise she didn't say it in them words,
But "dumb-bell"—that was what she meant all right,
And all because I couldn't understand her.

But what can you do with a girl that wants to set
Out on a rock and watch the waves come up,
Right in plain daylight? And you're talkin' to her,
And all at oncet she says, "Can't you keep quiet?
Can't you see the waves is whisperin' secrets at me?"
—If she wouldn't of been so wonderful to look at,
And so darn sweet the few times that she *was* sweet,
I wouldn't never fooled with her at all.
But that's the funny thing. The more I seen her,
And the more she went off into—you know—fits
Like she was miles away, the more I wanted her. . . .

Here's one trick I put up with from this Mame.
One time at ten P. M. she comes to the house,
Says, "Get your heavy coat, we're goin' ridin'."
"Ridin'," I says. "Say, Mame, what's eatin' you?
A blizzard's outside, and the worst this year."
"Shut up. Come on," she says, and drags me out.
We ride two hours in a open hansom,—
I guess that it was one that Noah had in the ark—
The snow just stingin' and beatin' on your face,
And all because Mame never done it before,
And seen the cab, and wanted to. She said
It was a real adventure. . . . I got chilblains. . . .

[1] Reprinted from *In American*, by John V. A. Weaver, by and with permission of and special arrangement with Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., authorized publishers.

What can you do when you take a girl to dinner,
And she goes and orders—heck—of all things—snails!
And when I ast her to a real good show,
She makes me change it to some darn grand oprer,
And won't set downstairs, but she has to stay
Up in the Peanut Gallery, with the Dagoes.

I sure did stand a lot! . . . She was bad enough
In the city; but when she got out to the country
She sure complete went wild. If she seen a field
Where they was grass and flowers, she takes a run
And jumps and rolls aroun'; and not just her,
She makes me do it, too. I was so shamed,
It wasn't right, us bein' so old, you might say. . . .

And one time toward evenin' we was walkin',
And come to a little crick. The fish was jumpin'
And right away she says, "I want to fish!"
We couldn't fish, I argues, there wasn't no poles,
Nor hooks, nor lines nor nothin'. She says, "Hush,
I got a pin. You bend it on a rock,
I'll get a line, all right, go on and bend,"
Whiles I was turned aroun', I hears a rip,
She hands me a long piece of her underskirt.
Honest, it makes me blush. She breaks a stick off,
And catches a grasshopper, and she fishes.
And what do you think? She catched a fish, at that,
A thing about two inches long, and say,
I thought it was a whale, the fuss she made.

She was so happy, I didn't know what to think,
And afterwards we laid down on a hay stack,
And she was watchin' the stars, and sorter hummin',
So sweet I got a notion it was me
That she was singin' about, and I tried to kiss her.
That sure was a bum guess. She turns all white,
And says, "All right, you had to ruin it.

I might of knew." And then we went back home,
Her starin' straight ahead, and sayin' nothin'. . . .

And then next day she was fine again.

I couldn't tell what she was ever thinkin'
Things went on that way, me bein' her dog,
You might say, tryin' to bust away, and yet
All the time comin' back. So then one day,
I swore I'd have a showdown. I was through
With all this foolin'. Either I was right
Or either wrong, and I was goin' to find out.

I ast her to eat lunch with me at Schlogels.
I gets there first, all set up and excited,
And in a minute here she comes, all fixed up,
Prettier'n a little red wagon. We sets down,
And, "That's a nice new suit. How good you look,"
Says Mame, and so I'm feelin' fine, right off,
And she wonderful, laughin' and talkin',
So's I can't hardly wait to say my spiel.

I orders and the waiter beats it. Then
I clears my throat, and looks at her, and starts,
"Mame, I got somethin' that I want to ast you—
Mame ——" And I starts to lean 'way over to her,
And finds my pants is ruined.
What do you think?
Some boob has stuck a great big wad of gum
Right to the chair and I was settin' on it!

You know, I got so mad I couldn't think.
I clean forgets all I was tryin' to say,
And hollers, "Damn it! . . . There was my new suit
All ruined with that gum." Mame busts out laughin',
And when she laughs I'm gettin' all the sorer.

Then she gets sore, too. "What's a little thing
Like that," she says. "You ack just like a kid!"
Maybe I did, but who's the guy that wouldn't?
I calls the manager and bawls him out
Like any guy would do.

And suddenly
Mame she gets right up, and she sorter smiles
And says, "Good-bye. And this is a real good-bye.
Charley, you'll never learn to really live
Unless you get so little hurts don't matter.
Life is too big to let a little thing like gum
Mean such a lot to you."—And out she sails.
I calls her up the next day. She tells me no,
She found that her and me can't hit it off.
"Here's the whole truth: You drag me down," she says
"You don't know how to dream, and never won't.
That's all. Good-bye."

MONOLOGUE BETWEEN A LADY SHOPPER AND A SALESMAN [1]

Carolyn Wells

YES, if you please, show me some fur coats. N-no, I don't know just what sort of fur I want; n-no, I don't know whether I want a coat or a cape. I want you to show them to me so I can tell. But I think I'd better take the coat shape, for you see I'm stout —oh, yes, I am—you needn't look like that—I realize that I'm—well, plump. I'm not like some women who can't see the defects of their own figures. Why, my neighbour, Mrs. Faxon, she—no, no, I positively do not want one of those short coats, they cut me off at

[1] By permission of the author.

the waistline—and not a light fur. You ought to know that I can't wear a short coat, nor one made of light fur!

Long, straight lines and dark colouring for me. You see I know. Now Mrs. Faxon, she got a light cream-coloured Krimmer; and, if you please, a short one! And she weighs as much as I do; well, anyway, nearly as much. My husband says —— Oh, that short ermine coat is a beauty! But not for me. I know my limitations. Show me a long black caracul. My, they're not very smart, are they? That sweet little ermine is a beauty. But, of course, light fur makes me look bigger. And as I said, I can't wear a short coat.

I've a friend who has one about like that. She looks ducky in it—but she's so slim—she's nothing but a spine! I'd rather have a little flesh on my bones! My husband says —— Oh, mercy! Not a Hudson seal! I had one of those three years ago. Yes, try a cape; I want to see them all—that's the only way to buy satisfactorily. Yes, a long cape—short garments cut me off so. Oh, heavens! Take it off! A cape makes me look a regular old Mother Bunch. Dear, I wish I'd kept up my diet and exercise. Coué's all right for blues or dyspepsia, but he doesn't take off weight.

You see, a long coat makes me look dignified. I'm not the sort of woman who buys the latest style whether it suits her figure or not. The art of dressing, I always say, lies in selecting models that suit your lines. Now my friend Mrs. Faxon, she's—well, dumpy, if you know what I mean; and in that light short coat she looks—well, she looks just like the picture in my baby's book of This Little Pig Went to Market! Honest, she does! Much as I'd like a short coat, or a light-coloured fur, I know better than to buy such a thing! Let me try on that short ermine a minute and I'll show you what I mean.

There, don't you see how it cuts me right in two? But what lovely fur it is! And really a bargain at that price! No, I can't take it—it cuts me off. I've always loved ermine ever since I was a child and played with kittens—and it has beautiful lines—maybe it doesn't cut me off so terribly.

No, I mustn't take it—I always wear dark gowns, you see and that pure white fur—stopping at the waistline—and my dark skirt below —well, when I look at it in the mirror sideways—and, of course, most people see me sideways—in passing, you know—no, there's no use—it makes me look positively—and my husband warned me about

wearing light colours on the street, and my sister-in-law said, "Whatever you do don't get one of those short coats."

Where's my own coat? Put it on me, please. No, you needn't show me any more. I've made up my mind. Yes, a charge account. Here's my card. Send me that short ermine one, please. Good morning.

2. *Notable Passages From Shakespeare*

CÆSAR TO HIS PETITIONERS

I must prevent thee, Cimber.
These couchings and these lowly courtesies,
Might fire the blood of ordinary men,
And turn pre-ordinance and first decree
Into the law of children. Be not fond,
To think that Cæsar bears such rebel blood
That will be thaw'd from the true quality
With that which melteth fools; I mean sweet words,
Low-crooked curtsies, and base spaniel fawning.
Thy brother by decree is banished:
If thou dost bend and pray and fawn for him,
I spurn thee like a cur out of my way.
Know, Cæsar doth not wrong, nor without cause
Will he be satisfied.
I could be well mov'd if I were as you;
If I could pray to move, prayers would move me;
But I am constant as the northern star,
Of whose true-fix'd and resting quality
There is no fellow in the firmament.
The skies are painted with unnumber'd sparks,
They are all fire and every one doth shine,
But there's but one in all doth hold his place:
So, in the world; 'tis furnished well with men,
And men are flesh and blood, and apprehensive;
Yet in the number I do know but one
That unassailable holds on his rank,
Unshak'd of motion: and that I am he,
Let me a little show it, even in this,

That I was constant Cimber should be banished,
And constant do remain to keep him so.

—*Julius Cæsar*

HERMIONE'S DEFENCE

Since what I am to say must be but that
Which contradicts my accusation, and
The testimony on my part no other
But what comes from myself, it shall scarce boot me
To say "not guilty": mine integrity,
Being counted falsehood, shall, as I express it,
Be so received. But thus, if powers divine
Behold our human actions, as they do,
I doubt not then but innocence shall make
False accusation blush, and tyranny
Tremble at patience. You, my lord, best know,
Who least will seem to do so, my past life
Hath been as continent, as chaste, as true,
As I am now unhappy; which is more
Than history can pattern, though devised
And play'd to take spectators. For behold me
A fellow of the royal bed, which owe
A moiety of the throne, a great king's daughter,
The mother to a hopeful prince, here standing
To prate and talk for life and honour 'fore
Who please to come and hear. For life, I prize it
As I weigh grief, which I would spare: for honour,
'Tis a derivative from me to mine,
And only that I stand for. I appeal
To your own conscience, sir, before Polixenes
Came to your court, how I was in your grace,
How merited to be so; since he came,
With what encounter so uncurrent I

Have strain'd, to appear thus: if one jot beyond
The bound of honour, or in act or will
That way inclining, harden'd be the hearts
Of all that hear me, and my near'st of kin
Cry fie upon my grave!

—*The Winter's Tale*

OTHELLO'S SPEECH BEFORE THE DUKE AND THE SENATORS

Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,
My very noble and approv'd good masters,
That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,
It is most true; true, I have married her:
The very head and front of my offending
Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my speech,
And little bless'd with the soft phrase of peace;
For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,
Till now some nine moons wasted, they have us'd
Their dearest action in the tented field;
And little of this great world can I speak,
More than pertains to feats of broil and battle;
And therefore little shall I grace my cause
In speaking for myself. Yet, by your gracious patience,
I will a round unvarnish'd tale deliver
Of my whole course of love; what drugs, what charms,
What conjuration, and what mighty magic,
For such proceeding I am charg'd withal,
I won his daughter.
Her father lov'd me; oft invited me;
Still question'd me the story of my life
From year to year, the battles, sieges, fortunes
That I have pass'd.
I ran it through, even from my boyish days

To the very moment that he bade me tell it;
Wherein I spake of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents by flood and field,
Of hair-breadth 'scapes i' the imminent deadly breach,
Of being taken by the insolent foe
And sold to slavery, of my redemption thence
And portance in my travel's history;
Wherein of antres vast and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks and hills whose heads touch heaven.
It was my hint to speak, such was the process;
And of the Cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders. This to hear
Would Desdemona seriously incline;
But still the house-affairs would draw her thence;
Which ever as she could with haste dispatch,
She'd come again, and with a greedy ear
Devour up my discourse. Which I observing,
Took once a pliant hour, and found good means
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
But not intentively: I did consent;
And often did beguile her of her tears,
When I did speak of some distressful stroke
That my youth suffer'd. My story being done,
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs:
She swore, in faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange;
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful:
She wish'd she had not heard it, yet she wish'd
That heaven had made her such a man; she thank'd me,
And bade me, if I had a friend that lov'd her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story,
And that would woo her. Upon this hint I spake:
She lov'd me for the dangers I had pass'd,
And I lov'd her that she did pity them.
This only is the witchcraft I have us'd.

—*Othello*

PORTIA ON MERCY

The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth, as the gentle rain from heaven,
Upon the place beneath; it is twice blessed—
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The thronèd monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway,
It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this—
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

—*Merchant of Venice*

HOTSPUR AND A POPINJAY

My liege, I did deny no prisoners:
But I remember, when the fight was done,
When I was dry with rage and extreme toil,
Breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword,

Came there a certain lord, neat, and trimly dress'd,
Fresh as a bridegroom; and his chin, new reap'd,
Show'd like a stubble-land at harvest-home:
He was perfumed like a milliner,
And 'twixt his fingers and his thumb he held
A pouncet-box, which ever and anon
He gave his nose and took 't away again;
Who therewith angry, when it next came there,
Took it in snuff: and still he smil'd and talk'd;
And as the soldiers bore dead bodies by,
He call'd them untaught knaves, unmannerly,
To bring a slovenly unhandsome corpse
Betwixt the wind and his nobility.
With many holiday and lady terms
He question'd me; among the rest, demanded
My prisoners in your majesty's behalf.
I then all smarting with my wounds being cold,
To be so pester'd with a popinjay,
Out of my grief and my impatience
Answer'd neglectingly, I know not what,
He should, or he should not; for he made me mad
To see him shine so brisk and smell so sweet
And talk so like a waiting-gentlewoman
Of guns, and drums, and wounds,—God save the mark!—
And telling me the sovereign'st thing on earth
Was parmaceti for an inward bruise;
And that it was great pity, so it was,
This villainous saltpetre should be digg'd
Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,
Which many a good tall fellow had destroy'd
So cowardly; and but for these vile guns,
He would himself have been a soldier.
This bald unjointed chat of his, my lord,
I answer'd indirectly, as I said;
And I beseech you, let not his report
Come current for an accusation
Betwixt my love and your high majesty.

—*Henry IV, Part I*

KATHERINE'S ADMONITION

Fie, fie! unknit that threatening unkind brow;
And dart not scornful glances from those eyes,
To wound thy lord, thy king, thy governor:
It blots thy beauty as frosts do bite the meads,
Confounds thy fame as whirlwinds shake fair buds,
And in no sense is meet or amiable.
A woman moved is like a fountain troubled,
Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty;
And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty
Will deign to sip or touch one drop of it.
Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,
Thy head, thy sovereign; one that cares for thee,
And for thy maintenance commits his body
To painful labor both by sea and land,
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,
While thou liest warm at home, secure and safe;
And craves no other tribute at thy hands
But love, fair looks and true obedience;
Too little payment for so great a debt.
Such duty as the subject owes the prince
Even such a woman oweth to her husband;
And when she is froward, peevish, sullen, sour,
And not obedient to his honest will,
What is she but a foul contending rebel,
And graceless traitor to her loving lord?
I am ashamed that women are so simple
To offer war where they should kneel for peace;
Or seek for rule, supremacy and sway,
When they are bound to serve, love and obey.
Come, come, you froward and unable worms!
My mind hath been as big as one of yours,
My heart as great, my reason haply more,
To bandy word for word and frown for frown;
But now I see our lances are but straws,

Our strength as weak, our weakness past compare,
That seeming to be most which we indeed least are.
Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,
And place your hands below your husband's foot:
In token of which duty, if he please,
My hand is ready, may it do him ease.

—*The Taming of the Shrew*

KING HENRY BEFORE HARFLEUR

Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more;
Or close the wall up with our English dead!
In peace there's nothing so becomes a man
As modest stillness and humility:
But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
Then imitate the action of the tiger;
Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,
Disguise fair nature with hard-favour'd rage;
Then lend the eye a terrible aspect;
Let it pry through the portage of the head
Like the brass cannon; let the brow o'erwhelm it
As fearfully as doth a galled rock
O'erhang and jutty his confounded base,
Swill'd with the wild and wasteful ocean.
Now set the teeth and stretch the nostril wide,
Hold hard the breath, and bend up every spirit
To his full height! On, on, you noblest English!
Whose blood is fet from fathers of war-proof;
Fathers that, like so many Alexanders,
Have in these parts from morn till even fought,
And sheath'd their swords for lack of argument.
Dishonour not your mothers; now attest
That those whom you called fathers did beget you.
Be copy now to men of grosser blood,

And teach them how to war. And you, good yeomen,
Whose limbs were made in England, show us here
The mettle of your pasture; let us swear
That you are worth your breeding; which I doubt not:
For there is none of you so mean and base
That hath not noble lustre in your eyes.
I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,
Straining upon the start. The game's afoot:
Follow your spirit; and, upon this charge
Cry "God for Harry! England and Saint George!"

—*Henry V*

QUEEN MARGARET'S TRIUMPH

I call'd thee then vain flourish of my fortune.
I call'd thee then poor shadow, painted queen;
The presentation of but what I was;
The flattering index of a direful pageant:
One heaved a-high, to be hurl'd down below;
A mother only mock'd with two sweet babes;
A dream of what thou wert, a breath, a bubble,
A sign of dignity, a garish flag,
To be the aim of every dangerous shot;
A queen in jest, only to fill the scene.
Where is thy husband now? where be thy brothers?
Where are thy children? wherein dost thou joy?
Who sues to thee and cries "God save the queen?"
Where be the bending peers that flatter'd thee?
Where be the thronging troops that follow'd thee?
Decline all this, and see what now thou art:
For happy wife, a most distressed widow;
For joyful mother, one that wails the name;
For queen, a very caitiff crown'd with care;
For one being sued to, one that humbly sues;

For one that scorn'd at me, now scorn'd of me;
For one being fear'd of all, now fearing one;
For one commanding all, obey'd of none.
Thus hath the course of justice wheel'd about,
And left thee but a very prey to time:
Having no more but thought of what thou wert,
To torture thee the more, being what thou art.
Thou didst usurp my place, and dost thou not
Usurp the just proportion of my sorrow?
Now thy proud neck bears half my burthen'd yoke,
From which even here I slip my weary neck,
And leave the burthen of it all on thee.
Farewell, York's wife, and queen of sad mischance:
These English woes will make me smile in France.

—*Richard III*

CASSIUS ON CÆSAR

Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
Like a Colossus, and we petty men
Walk under his huge legs and peep about
To find ourselves dishonourable graves.
Men at some time are masters of their fates;
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.
Brutus and Cæsar: what should be in that "Cæsar"?
Why should that name be sounded more than yours?
Write them together, yours is as fair a name;
Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well;
Weigh them, it is as heavy; conjure with 'em,
Brutus will start a spirit as soon as Cæsar.
Now, in the names of all the gods at once,
Upon what meat doth this our Cæsar feed,
That he is grown so great? Age, thou art shamed!

Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!
When went there by an age, since the great flood,
But it was fam'd with more than with one man?
When could they say till now, that talked of Rome,
That her wide walls encompass'd but one man?
Now is it Rome indeed, and room enough,
When there is in it but one only man.
O, you and I have heard our fathers say,
There was a Brutus once that would have brook'd
The eternal devil to keep his state in Rome
As easily as a king.

—*Julius Cæsar*

JULIET'S SINCERITY

Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.
Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny
What I have spoke: but farewell compliment!
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say "Ay,"
And I will take thy word: yet, if thou swear'st,
Thou mayst prove false: at lovers' perjuries,
They say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay,
So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond;
And therefore thou mayst think my 'haviour light:
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.
I should have been more strange, I must confess,
But that thou overheard'st ere I was ware,

My true love's passion: therefore pardon me,
And not impute this yielding to light love,
Which the dark night hath so discovered.

—*Romeo and Juliet*

MERCUTIO'S PHANTASY

She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the fore-finger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies
Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep:
Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs;
The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;
The traces, of the smallest spider's web;
The collars, of the moonshine's watery beams;
Her whip, of cricket's bone; the lash, of film;
Her waggoner, a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid;
Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,
Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,
Time out o' mind the fairies' coach-makers.
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;
O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on curtsies straight;
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees;
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream;
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,
Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are.
Sometimes she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit;
And sometimes comes she with a tithe-pig's tail,
Tickling a parson's nose as a' lies asleep,

Then dreams he of another benefice;
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,
Of healths five fathoms deep; and then anon
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes;
And, being thus frighted, swears a prayer or two,
And sleeps again.

—*Romeo and Juliet*

3. Notable Passages From Modern Drama

WILL SHAKESPEARE [1]

Clemence Dane

QUEEN ELIZABETH. Why, not a keel
Grounds on the Cornish pebbles, but the jar
Thrills through all English earth home to my feet.
No riderless horse snuffs blood and gallops home
To a girl widowed, but I the sparking hoofs
Hear pound as her heart pounds, waiting; for my spies
Are everywhere. Do not my English swifts
Report to me at dusk, eavesdropping low,
The number of my English primroses
In English woods all spring? The gulls on Thames
Scream past the Tower "Storm in Channel! Storm!"
And if I hear not, sudden my drinking glass
Rings out "Send help, lest English sailors drown!"
The lantern moon swings o'er unvisited towns
Signalling "Peace!" or a star shoots out of the west
Across my window, flashing "Danger here!"
And is it Ireland rising, or a child
On chalk-pit roof after the blackberries,
I'm warned, and bid my human servants haste.
The flat-worn stones, the echoes of the streets
At night when drunkards tumble, citizens
In the half silence and half light trot home,
Reveal the well, the ill in my own land.
I am its eyes, its pulse, its finger-tips,
The wakeful partner of its married soul.

[1] From Act IV, reprinted by permission of the publisher, The Macmillan Company.

I know what darkness does, what dawn discovers
In all the English country. I am the Queen.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN [1]

John Drinkwater

SCENE I

[Lincoln is to receive the Republican nomination for President which means certain election. Some friends are congratulating Mrs. Lincoln.]

MRS. LINCOLN. You said this was a great evening for me. It is, and I'll say more than I mostly do, because it is. I'm likely to go into history now with a great man. For I know better than any how great he is. I'm plain looking and I've a sharp tongue, and I've a mind that doesn't always go in his easy, high way. And that's what history will see, and it will laugh a little and say, "Poor Abraham Lincoln." That's all right, but it's not all. I've always known when he should go forward, and when he should hold back. I've watched, and watched, and what I've learnt America will profit by. There are women like that, lots of them. But I'm lucky. My work's going farther than Illinois—it's going farther than any of us can tell. I made things easy for him to think and think when we were poor, and now his thinking has brought him to this. They wanted to make him Governor of Oregon, and he would have gone and have come to nothing there. I stopped him. Now they're coming to ask him to be President, and I've told him to go.

SCENE III

[A lady visitor, Mrs. Otherly, has just told Lincoln she believes war must be wrong under any circumstances, for any cause.]

[1] The following two excerpts from *Abraham Lincoln* are reprinted by permission of, and special arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Company.

LINCOLN. I beg you not to harass yourself, madam. Ma'am, I too believe war to be wrong. It is the weakness and the jealousy and the folly of men that make a thing so wrong possible. But we are all weak, and jealous, and foolish. That's how the world is, ma'am, and we cannot outstrip the world. Some of the worst of us are sullen, aggressive still—just clumsy, greedy pirates. Some of us have grown out of that. But the best of us have an instinct to resist aggression if it won't listen to persuasion. You may say it's a wrong instinct. I don't know. But it's there, and it's there in millions of good men. I don't believe it's a wrong instinct. I believe that the world must come to wisdom slowly. It is for us who hate aggression to persuade men always and earnestly against it, and hope that, little by little, they will hear us. But in the mean time there will come moments when the aggressors will force the instinct to resistance to act. Then we must act earnestly, praying always in our courage that never again will this thing happen. And then we must turn again, and again, and again to persuasion. This appeal to force is the misdeed of an imperfect world. But we are imperfect. We must strive to purify the world, but we must not think ourselves pure above the world. When I had this thing to decide, it would have been easy to say, "No, I will have none of it; it is evil and I will not touch it." But that would have decided nothing, and I saw what I believed to be the truth as I now put it to you, ma'am. It's a forlorn thing for any man to have this responsibility in his heart. I may see wrongly, but that's how I see.

STRIFE [1]

John Galsworthy

[Roberts, one of the leaders of a long disheartening strike in an English industry, discovers the strikers led by Thomas are slipping in the direction of a compromise which will take place in

[1] From Act II, used with the permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

London some distance away. Thomas maintains to compromise is to follow the demands of nature.]

ROBERTS. You don't want to hear me, then? You'll listen to Rous and to that old man, but not to me. You'll listen to Sim Harness of the Union that's treated you *so fair*; maybe you'll listen to those men from London? Ah! You groan! What for? You love their feet on your necks, don't you? (*Then as* BULGIN *elbows his way towards the platform, with calm pathos*) You'd like to break my jaw, John Bulgin. Let me speak, then do your smashing, if it gives you pleasure. (BULGIN *stands motionless and sullen.*) Am I a liar, a coward, a traitor? If only I were, ye'd listen to me, I'm sure. (*The murmurings cease, and there is now dead silence.*) Is there a man of you here that has less to gain by striking? Is there a man of you that had more to lose? Is there a man of you that has given up *eight hundred* pounds since this trouble here began? Come now, is there? How much has Thomas given up—ten pounds or five, or what? You listened to him, and what had he to say? "None can pretend," he said, "that I'm not a believer in principle—(*with biting irony*)—but when Nature says: 'No further,' 't is going against Nature." *I* tell you if a man cannot say to Nature: "Budge me from this if ye can!"—(*with a sort of exaltation*)—his principles are but his belly. "Oh, but," Thomas says, "a man can be pure and honest, just and merciful, and take off his hat to Nature!" *I* tell you Nature's neither pure nor honest, just nor merciful. You chaps that live over the hill, an' go home dead beat in the dark on a snowy night—don't ye fight your way every inch of it? Do you go lyin' down an' trustin' to the tender mercies of this merciful Nature? Try it and you'll soon know with what ye've got to deal. 'Tis only by that—(*he strikes a blow with his clenched fist*)—in Nature's face that a man can be a man. "Give in," says Thomas, "go down on your knees; throw up your foolish fight, an' perhaps," he said, "perhaps your enemy will chuck you down a crust."

THE WEAVERS [1]

Gerhart Hauptmann

PASTOR KITTELHAUS. You are young, Mr. Weinhold, which explains everything. At your age we old fellows held—well, I won't say the same opinions—but certainly opinions of the same tendency. And there's something fine about youth—youth with its grand ideals. But unfortunately, Mr. Weinhold, they don't last; they are as fleeting as April sunshine. Wait till you are my age. When a man has said his say from the pulpit for thirty years—fifty-two times every year, not including saints' days—he has inevitably calmed down. Think of me, Mr. Weinhold, when you come that length. However restless-minded a man may be—(*in a tone of reproof*)—and you are a case in point—however violently and wantonly he may attack the existing order of things, he calms down in the end. I grant you, certainly, that among our professional brethren individuals are to be found, who, at a fairly advanced age, still play youthful pranks. One preaches against the drink evil and founds temperance societies, another publishes appeals which undoubtedly read most effectively. But what good do they do? The distress among the weavers, where it does exist, is in no way lessened—but the peace of society is undermined. No, no; one feels inclined in such cases to say: Cobbler, stick to your last; don't take to caring for the belly, you who have the care of the souls. Preach the pure Word of God, and leave all else to Him who provides shelter and food for the birds, and clothes the lilies of the field. But I should like to know where our good host, Mr. Dreissiger, has suddenly disappeared to.

[1] From Act IV, reprinted by permission of The Viking Press, the authorized publishers.

THE YELLOW JACKET [1]

A CHINESE PLAY DONE IN A CHINESE MANNER

George C. Hazelton and Benrimo

Scene: The Garden of DUE JUNG FAH, *the second wife of* WU SIN YIN, THE GREAT.

TSO (*to audience*). No one comes. The opportunity was not permitted me to tell you truly that I am Tso, the maid of Due Jung Fah. When I met you my mistress wanted to unburden her august soul to you. Though I was filled with sky words, I am too adroit to talk when she wishes to. I am the dust in the sunbeam. I am one of the darkest shadows of our play. It is the modest little maid whose manner is filled with sunlight that throws the prettiest little shadows of the dark. Innocence makes the best play-shadow. The night shadow has no danger, for you see it as you pass. Sweet little flitting shadows like mine trip you in your path. I threw a tiny rainbow shadow across Due Jung Fah's eyes which looked like the first wife in her richest jewels and prettiest gown; and then a big thunder-cloud shadow across the eyes of Wu Sin Yin and the cloud took on the image of his twisted child (by Chee Moo his first wife). If Chee Moo is gently disposed of, Due Jung Fah becomes the first wife and I become the first maid. The first maid, Suey Sin Fah, faints at the incense of some flowers. Lee Sin, her husband, deserves a wife more brave. Why not a gentle little shadow?

[1] By Hazelton and Benrimo, copyright, 1913. Used by special permission of the publishers, The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

CRAIG'S WIFE [1]

George Kelly

MRS. FRAZIER. He'll be dead ten years this coming November. Yes. Yes, he died the twenty-third of November, 1915. He was injured on the second, in an automobile accident at Pride's Crossing, Massachusetts: we were on our way back from Bar Harbor—I was telling Mr. Craig about it. And he lingered from that until the twenty-third. So, you see, the melancholy days have a very literal significance for me.—Yes, that is the one month I must get away. I don't care where I go, but I must go somewhere; I couldn't stand it here; I have too many memories. So every year, as soon as ever November comes around, I just pack up my things and go out to Dayton, Ohio. I have a married daughter living out there; her husband is connected with the National Cash Register Company. And, of course, she makes all manner of fun of my annual pilgrimages to Dayton. She says instead of being in England now that April's there, with me it's in Dayton now that November's there. (*She laughs faintly.*) We have great fun about it. But, of course, her husband's business is there. And I think sometimes perhaps I should spend more time with her; I think it would help us both. But the trouble is, when I go out there; it's so very difficult for me to get away again. She has the most adorable baby—just fifteen months old; and he thinks there's nobody in the world like his grandmother. And, of course, *I* think there's nobody in the world like *him*. Although, to tell the truth, I did resent him terribly when he was born—to think that he's made me a grandmother. But he's quite won me over; and I suppose I'm as foolish now as all the other grandmothers.

[1] From Act I, reprinted by permission of Little, Brown & Company.

THE SERVANT IN THE HOUSE [1]

Charles Rann Kennedy

Scene: The Bishop's Study.

[The Bishop, a mercenary man of the world, has just said, "Now! Tell me about your church."]

MANSON. I am afraid you may not consider it an altogether growing concern. It has to be seen in a certain way, under certain conditions. Some people never *see* it at all. You must understand, this is no dead pile of stones and unmeaning timber. *It is a living thing.*—When you enter it you hear a sound as of some mighty poem chanted. Listen long enough, and you will learn that it is made up of the beating of human hearts, of the nameless music of men's souls—that is, if you have ears. If you have eyes, you will presently see the church itself—a looming mystery of many shapes and shadows, leaping sheer from floor to dome. The work of no ordinary builder!

The pillars of it go up like the brawny trunks of heroes: the sweet human flesh of men and women is moulded about its bulwarks, strong, impregnable: the faces of little children laugh out from every corner-stone: the terrible spans and arches of it are the joined hands of comrades; and up in the heights and spaces there are inscribed the numberless musings of all the dreamers of the world. It is yet building—building and built upon. Sometimes the work goes forward in deep darkness: sometimes in blinding light: now beneath the burden of unutterable anguish: now to the tune of great laughter and heroic shoutings like the cry of thunder.

Sometimes, in the silence of the night-time, one may hear the tiny hammerings of the comrades at work up in the dome—the comrades who have climbed ahead.

[1] Reprinted by permission of Harper & Brothers.

THE HAIRY APE [1]

Eugene O'Neill

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

Scene One: The Firemen's forecastle of a transatlantic liner an hour after sailing from New York.

PADDY. We belong to this, you're saying? We make the ship go, you're saying? Yerra then, that Almighty God have pity on us! (*His voice runs into the wail of a keen, he rocks back and forth on his bench.*) Oh, to be back in the fine days of my youth, ochone! Oh, there was fine beautiful ships them days—clippers wid tall masts touching the sky—fine strong men in them—men that was sons of the sea as if 'twas the mother that bore them. . . .

Oh, to be scudding south again wid the power of the Trade wind driving her on steady through the nights and the days! Full sail on her! Nights and days! Nights when the foam of the wake would be flaming wid fire, when the sky'd be blazing and winking wid stars. Or the full of the moon maybe. Then you'd see her driving through the gray night, her sails stretching aloft all silver and white, not a sound on the deck, the lot of us dreaming dreams, till you'd believe 'twas no real ship at all you was on but a ghost ship like the Flying Dutchman they say does be roaming the seas forever more widout touching a port. . . .

Work—aye, hard work—but who'd mind that at all? Sure, you worked under the sky, and 'twas work wid skill and daring to it. And wid the day done, in the dog watch, smoking me pipe at ease, the lookout would be raising land maybe, and we'd see the mountains of South Americy wid the red fire of the setting sun painting their white tops and the clouds floating by them!

(*He goes on mournfully.*) Yerra, what's the use of talking? 'Tis a dead man's whisper. 'Twas them days men belonged to ships, not now. 'Twas them days a ship was a part of the sea, and a man

[1] Reprinted with the permission of Horace Liveright, the authorized publisher.

was a part of a ship, and the sea joined all together and made it one.

(*Scornfully.*) Is it one wid this you'd be, Yank—black smoke from the funnels smudging the sea, smudging the decks—the bloody engines pounding and throbbing and shaking—wid divil a sight of sun or a breath of clean air—choking our lungs wid coal dust—breaking our backs and hearts in the hell of the stokehole—feeding the bloody furnace—feeding our lives along wid the coal, I'm thinking—caged in by steel from a sight of the sky like bloody apes in the Zoo!

CYRANO DE BERGERAC[1]

Edmond Rostand

Scene: The kitchen of RAGUENEAU'S *cookshop.*

[Le Bret has told Cyrano he should show more humility.]

CYRANO. And what should a man do? Seek some grandee, take him for a patron, and like the obscure creeper clasping a tree-trunk, and licking the bark of that which props it up, attain to height by craft instead of strength? No, I thank you. Dedicate, as they all do, poems to financiers? Wear motley in the humble hope of seeing the lips of a minister distend for once in a smile not ominous of ill? No, I thank you. Eat every day a toad? Be threadbare at the belly with grovelling? Have his skin dirty soonest at the knees? Practice feats of dorsal elasticity? No, I thank you. With one hand stroke the goat while the other he waters the cabbage? Make gifts of senna that countergifts of rhubarb may accrue, and indefatigably swing his censer in some beard? No, I thank you. Push himself from lap to lap, become a great man in a great little circle, propel his ship with madrigals for oars and in his sails the sighs of the elderly ladies? No, I thank you. Get the good editor Sercy to print his verses at proper expense? No, I thank

[1] From Act II, reprinted by permission of Walter Hampton.

you. Contrive to be nominated Pope in conclaves held by imbeciles in wineshops? No, I thank you. Work to construct a name on the basis of a sonnet, instead of constructing other sonnets? No, I thank you. Discover talent in tyros, and in them alone? Stand in terror of what gazettes may please to say, and say to myself, "At whatever cost, may I figure in the Paris Mercury!" No, I thank you. Calculate, cringe, peak, prefer making a call to a poem,—petition, solicit, apply? No, I thank you! No, I thank you! No, I thank you!

But . . . sing, dream, laugh, loaf, be single, be free, have eyes that look squarely, a voice with a ring; wear if he chooses, his hat hindside afore; for a yes, for a no, fight a duel or turn a ditty! . . . Work, without concern of fortune or of glory, to accomplish the heart's-desired journey to the moon! Put forth nothing that has not its spring in the very heart, yet, modest, say to himself, "Old man, be satisfied with blossoms, fruits, yea, leaves alone, so they be gathered in your garden and not another man's!" Then, if it happen that to some small extent he triumph, be obliged to render of the glory, to Cæsar, not one jot, but honestly appropriate it all. In short, scorning to be the parasite, the creeper, if even failing to be the oak, rise, not perchance to a great height, . . . but rise alone!

LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN[1]

Oscar Wilde

[The Duchess, very much of a meddler, is about to tell Lady Windermere her husband is unfaithful.]

DUCHESS OF BERWICK. Ah, what indeed, dear? That is the point. He goes to see her continually, and stops for hours at a time, and while he is there she is not at home to any one. Not that many

[1] From Act I.

ladies call on her, dear, but she has a great many disreputable male friends—my own brother in particular, as I told you—and that is what makes it so dreadful about Windermere. We looked upon *him* as being such a model husband, but I am afraid there is no doubt about it. My dear nieces—you know the Saville girls, don't you?—such nice domestic creatures—plain, dreadfully plain, but so good—well, they're always at the window doing fancy work, and making ugly things for the poor, which I think so useful of them in these dreadful socialistic days, and this terrible woman has taken a house in Curzon Street, right opposite them—such a respectable street, too. I don't know what we're coming to! And they tell me that Windermere goes there four and five times a week —they *see* him. They can't help it—and although they never talk scandal, they—well, of course—they remark on it to every one. And the worst of it all is, that I have been told that the woman has got a great deal of money out of somebody, for it seems that she came to London six months ago without anything at all to speak of, and now she has this charming house in Mayfair, drives her pony in the Park every afternoon, and all—well all—since she has known poor dear Windermere.

4. Skits and Sketches, New and Old

THE FRIEND OF HUMANITY AND THE KNIFE GRINDER

George Canning

Friend of Humanity

Needy Knife-grinder! whither are you going?
Rough is the road, your wheel is out of order—
Bleak blows the blast;—your hat has got a hole in't,
So have your breeches.

Weary Knife-grinder! little think the proud ones
Who in their coaches roll along the turnpike
Road, what hard work 'tis crying all day, "Knives and
Scissors to grind O!"

Tell me, Knife-grinder, how you came to grind knives:
Did some rich man tyrannically use you?
Was it the 'Squire? or Parson of the Parish?
Or the Attorney?

Was it the 'Squire, for killing of his game? or
Covetous Parson, for his tithes distraining?
Or roguish Lawyer, made you lose your little
All in a lawsuit?

(Have you not read the Rights of Man, by Tom Paine?)
Drops of compassion tremble on my eyelids,
Ready to fall, as soon as you have told your
Pitiful story.

Knife-grinder

Story! God bless you! I have none to tell, Sir,
Only last night a-drinking at the Chequers',
This poor old hat and breeches, as you see, were
Torn in a scuffle.

Constables came up for to take me into
Custody; they took me before the justice;
Justice Oldmixon put me in the parish-
Stocks for a vagrant.

I should be glad to drink your Honour's health in
A Pot of Beer, if you will give me Sixpence;
But for my part, I never love to meddle
With politics, Sir.

Friend of Humanity

I give thee Sixpence! I will see thee damned first—
Wretch! whom no sense of wrongs can rouse to vengeance—
Sordid, unfeeling, reprobate, degraded,
Spiritless outcast!

(*Kicks the Knife-grinder, overturns his wheel, and exit in a transport of Republican Enthusiasm and Universal Philanthropy.*)

ESCAPE (EPISODE VIII)[1]

John Galsworthy

[In the parlour of a cottage of gentility are two maiden ladies —Miss Grace, about forty-seven, brewing tea at a little table before the fire, Right, and Miss Dora, much younger, still dressed in hunting togs, standing at the open French window, Back.]

[1] Reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

MISS DORA. There's such a glow on the Cleave, Grace. Most lovely red. We killed. Everybody was looking out for that escaped convict.

MISS GRACE. Did you see him?

MISS DORA. No, thank goodness. Poor hunted wretch!

MISS GRACE. If you think hunted things are poor, why do you go hunting?

MISS DORA. Foxes hunt and expect to be hunted.

MISS GRACE. So do convicts. Sympathy's wasted on them. Tea, Dora.

MISS DORA. This isn't a common convict. It's that Captain Denant, you remember ——

MISS GRACE. Oh!—not likely to forget the row we had about his case. Well! it served him right!

MISS DORA (*Going to the table and sitting down. Looking steadily at her sister*). For a good woman, Grace, you know—you're awfully hard.

MISS GRACE. Tea-cake, please. I like consistency.

MISS DORA (*Deeply*). I think you're right.

MISS GRACE (*Surprised*). How?

MISS DORA. It *is* a shame to hunt a fox—much better to shoot it.

MISS GRACE. There'd soon be no foxes. Don't get *that* bee into your bonnet *here*. What with rabbits and chained dogs, you've set the farmers by the ears as it is. Wait till we go to Bath. You can have as many bees as you like there.

MISS DORA. I shan't hunt any more.

MISS GRACE. Then you're very foolish, if you enjoy it. Will you come over to the Service with me this evening?

MISS DORA. D'you know what I wish *you'd* say, Grace? "I shan't go to church any more."

MISS GRACE. I wish to God, Dora, you'd give up free thought!

MISS DORA. I wish to God, Grace, you'd give up religion.

MISS GRACE. You only hurt the Vicar by it.

MISS DORA (*Shaking her head*). He's too good a sort to mind.

MISS GRACE. You're too perverse for anything. I've only to say something and you set your will to the opposite.

MISS DORA. My dear, my will is nothing to yours. I haven't the ego for it.

MISS GRACE (*Coldly*). You mean I'm egoistic? Thank you.

MISS DORA. Sorry, Grace.

MISS GRACE. Will you have another cup?

MISS DORA. Please.

She is holding out her cup and MISS GRACE *has poured from the teapot, when a figure comes rushing through the French window. They both drop their hands and stare.* MATT, *panting and distressed, makes a sudden revealing gesture of appeal, and blots himself out behind a window curtain. The hue and cry is heard off. The two ladies are still staring in wild surprise, when the farmer appears at the French window.*

FARMER. Which way d' 'e go?

MISS DORA. Who?

FARMER. Convict. Mun cam' over your waal un' round the corner ther'.

MISS DORA. Oh! Yes. I thought I saw. Across the lawn, and over the wall at the far end, Mr. Browning. Quick!

(*Behind her the figure and face of* MISS GRACE *are expressive.*)

FARMER. Gude! Woi! Over the waal 'e went. To him, boys! Chop him before he'm into the spinney.

(*The hue and cry passes the window, running—the two* LABORERS, *the* CONSTABLE, and TWO TOURIST YOUTHS. *The cries die off and leave a charged silence—the Two Ladies on their feet.*)

MATT (*Emerging, still breathless, with his hat in his hand. Noting* MISS DORA'S *riding kit, he turns to* MISS GRACE). Thank you, Madam.

MISS GRACE. Not me.

MATT (*Making a bow to* MISS DORA). That was great of you, great!

MISS DORA. Keep back—one of them might see. (*She draws the curtains as* MATT *shrinks back.*)

MISS GRACE. Great! To tell such a lie! And for a convict!

MATT (*Recovering his self-possession*). If you'll pardon my saying so, that makes it greater. To tell a lie for an archbishop wouldn't strain one a bit.

MISS GRACE. Please don't blaspheme.

MISS DORA. Will you have a cup of tea, Sir?

MISS GRACE (*In a low voice*). Really, Dora!

MATT (*Dropping his hat and taking the cup from* MISS DORA). It's too good of you. (*He drinks it straight off and hands it back.*)

I'm awfully sorry for butting in like this; but it was neck or nothing.

MISS GRACE. Then I think it should have been nothing, Sir, considering the position you have placed my poor sister in.

MISS DORA (*Hotly*). Poor sister! Grace, you ——!

MATT. When you're hunted all you think of is the next move.

MISS DORA. I'm afraid you're awfully done.

MATT. Thanks, I'm getting my wind back. I feel like kissing the hem of your garment.

MISS DORA. It hasn't got one. Wasn't it rather mad to escape?

MATT. I don't think so. It's shown me how decent people can be.

MISS DORA. Did they ill-treat you?

MATT. Oh! no, the treatment's all right—a trifle monotonous.

MISS DORA. Listen!

(*They listen. Faint shouting.*)

Where are you making for?

MATT. No plans. They're no good. It's like a battle—you change 'em before you use 'em.

MISS DORA. I read who you were in the papers.

MATT. Oh! yes. I'm in big print? Thank you most awfully. I'll clear out now.

MISS DORA. No, wait! (*At the curtains*) I'll be back in a minute.

MISS GRACE (*Turning round to him*). I suppose you call yourself a gentleman?

MATT. I really don't know. Depends on who I'm with. I might be contracted.

MISS GRACE. You see the sort of woman my sister is—impulsive, humanitarian. I'm—I'm very fond of her.

MATT. Naturally. She's splendid.

MISS GRACE. If you don't want to involve her ——

MISS DORA (*Reappearing through the curtains*). I think I can hide you.

MISS GRACE. Dora!

MATT. No, no! It's not good enough. I can't let you ——

MISS DORA (*Turning on her sister*). I'm going to, Grace. (*They speak together in rapid tones.*)

MISS GRACE. Not in this house.

MISS DORA. It's as much my house as yours. You need have nothing to do with it.

MISS GRACE (*Drawing her from the window*). At least you haven't broken the law yet. And you're not going to now.

MISS DORA. I can't bear to see a soldier and a gentleman chased by a lot of chawbacons.

MISS GRACE (*With a glance at* MATT). Dora, you mustn't. It's wrong and it's absurd.

MISS DORA (*Heated*). Go upstairs. If I have to refer to you, I'll say you've seen nothing. And so can you.

MISS GRACE (*Her voice rising*). You expect *me* to tell lies!

MATT, *unseen in the heat of the discussion, makes a motion of despair and slips out of the window.*

MISS DORA. I'm going to hide him, I tell you. Captain—(*Suddenly turning to* MATT, *she sees that he is no longer there*) Where is he?

The TWO SISTERS *stand silent, blankly gazing about them.*

MISS DORA. Did he go by the door or the window?

MISS GRACE. I don't know.

MISS DORA. Didn't you see him?

MISS GRACE. I did not. (*At the expression on her sister's face*) I say I did not.

MISS DORA *looks behind the window curtain, then cautiously out of the window, then recoils before the* CONSTABLE, *who comes in heated and breathless, followed by the* FARMER *and the* FIRST LABORER, *who stops outside.*

CONSTABLE. Beg pardon, Miss. We've lost 'un. He'm a fair twister. Maybe he doubled back. We'll have a luke over, if an' in case he'm hidin' yere somewhere about. Can we go thru yere?

MISS DORA. He can't be in the house.

MISS GRACE *stands pursing her lips.*

FARMER. We med 'ave a luke, Miss, after that. 'E'm a proper varmint.

Without waiting for further permission, the two pass through the room and go out Left. The TWO SISTERS *stand looking at each other.*

MISS DORA. I won't have him caught! (*She moves toward the door.*)

MISS GRACE (*Seizing her sister's skirt*). Stop! I tell you!

MISS DORA. Let go!

MISS GRACE. I shall not. You're crazy. What is it to you?

MISS DORA. Let go, Grace!

MISS GRACE. You can't help him without breaking the law.

MISS DORA. Will you let me go, Grace? I shall hit you.

MISS GRACE. Very well. Hit me then!

The TWO SISTERS *clinch, and for a moment it looks as if there were to be a physical struggle between them. There are sounds of approach.*

MISS DORA. Let go!

They unclinch, and wait for the door to open. Re-enter the FARMER *and the* CONSTABLE.

FARMER. Well, he'm not yere; that's certain for zure.

CONSTABLE (*Between the two*). You're quite sure, Miss, yu saw 'im over that wall?

A tense moment.

MISS DORA. Quite!

MISS GRACE *has drawn her breath in with a hiss.*

FARMER. And not seen un since?

MISS DORA. No.

FARMER. Nor yu, Miss?

MISS DORA *stares at her sister.*

MISS GRACE (*Throwing back her head, and with a face like a mask*). No.

FARMER (*Picking up* MATT'S *hat, left by him as he fled*). 'Ere, what's this?

MISS DORA (*Recovering*). That? An old hat of my brother's that I use sometimes.

FARMER. 'Tis uncommon like the one that varmint was wearin'.

MISS DORA. Is it? Those fishing hats are all the same. (*Taking the hat.*) Have you tried the orchard, Mr. Browning?

FARMER. Ah! we mun try that, but 'tis getting powerful dimsy. Come, boys, we mun 'ave a gude old luke. The varmint fuled me bravely. I mun get me own back.

MISS DORA. Try the vicarage!

They pass at the window. The TWO SISTERS *are left silent.* MISS GRACE *suddenly sits down at the table and covers her face with her hand.*

MISS DORA. You told it beautifully, Grace. Thank you!

MISS GRACE. (*Uncovering her face with a fierce gesture*). Thank me for telling a lie!

MISS DORA. I'm sorry.

MISS GRACE. Sorry? You'd make me do it again!

MISS DORA. (*Simply*). I would. (*Looking after the hunt*) Poor fellow!

On the look between them
The Curtain Falls

STONE DEAF [1]

A PLAYLET TO DISPROVE THE THEORY THAT THE YOUNG SHOULD BE SEEN AND NOT HEARD

Geoffrey Kerr

The scene is the gloomiest room in a particularly gloomy club. It is done in dark walnut, with heavy, brass-studded leather chairs. There is, about everything in it, an air of dull respectability.

The sole occupant of the room is an OLD MAN, *seated in the club's deepest armchair. He is reading the daily paper with a lack of relish which bespeaks a firm conviction that the world is going to the dogs. He is entirely in keeping with the spirit of the stolid room.*

A YOUNG MAN *enters, passing through on his way out of the club to keep an appointment. His youth and eagerness are precisely antithetical to the room and its occupant.*

He notices the OLD MAN *and is seized with a slight spasm of politeness.*

THE YOUNG MAN (*Not stopping*). Good morning, sir.

THE OLD MAN (*From behind his paper*). Eh?

THE YOUNG MAN (*Stopping*). Good morning, sir.

[1] Reprinted from *Vanity Fair*, with the permission of the Condé Nast Publications, Inc., copyright, 1926.

THE OLD MAN (*Putting down his paper with a pleased air*). Much better, thank you.

THE YOUNG MAN. That's good, sir. It's wonderful weather. (*He edges away.*)

THE OLD MAN (*Benignly*). H'm?

THE YOUNG MAN (*Coming back*). It's wonderful weather, sir. (*The* OLD MAN *looks interested but puzzled.*) I say, sir, that it's really perfectly wonderful weather. (*He again moves away.*)

THE OLD MAN (*As if he can hardly believe his ears*). *What's* that?

THE YOUNG MAN (*Again coming back, but now beginning to regret his spasm of politeness*). I had only said, sir, that it's really perfectly wonderful weather.

THE OLD MAN (*Most interested*). Eh?

THE YOUNG MAN (*With meticulous enunciation*). I just made a perfectly ordinary and uninteresting remark about the weather, sir.

THE OLD MAN (*Deeply stirred*). No!! Really?!!!

THE YOUNG MAN (*Loudly*). I'm talking about the *weather*, sir.

THE OLD MAN. *Who* have?

THE YOUNG MAN (*More loudly*). No, sir—the *weather!* (*He once more starts to leave.*)

THE OLD MAN. Yes, yes, I heard you; but who's the man?

THE YOUNG MAN (*Once more returning*). What man, sir?

THE OLD MAN. Eh?

THE YOUNG MAN (*Loudly*). What man, sir?

THE OLD MAN (*In a tone which implies that he considers that the* YOUNG MAN *is speaking very indistinctly*). I can't quite get it.

THE YOUNG MAN (*Very loudly*). What man, sir?

THE OLD MAN. I don't know him. Does he come from Chicago?

THE YOUNG MAN (*Getting slightly frantic*). No, sir, you don't understand.

THE OLD MAN. H'm?

THE YOUNG MAN (*Getting slightly more frantic*). I said, sir, that you don't understand.

THE OLD MAN. Very what?

THE YOUNG MAN (*Getting much more frantic*). You don't *understand*, sir.

THE OLD MAN (*In cordial agreement*). Yes, indeed—*very* underhand.

THE YOUNG MAN (*Getting very frantic*). No, sir, you haven't under-

stood me at all. I simply made a quite innocent remark about the weather.

THE OLD MAN (*In very cordial agreement*). Yes, it is. How's Jim taking it?

THE YOUNG MAN (*Utterly frantic*). Taking *what?*

THE OLD MAN. Taking dope? Dear, dear, that's bad. Tell me all about it.

THE YOUNG MAN (*Giving up all hope and deciding to escape before he loses his voice*). I'm afraid I'll have to be getting along now, sir.

THE OLD MAN. What's that?

THE YOUNG MAN (*With a supreme yell*). I said I'm afraid I'll have to be getting along now, sir.

THE OLD MAN (*Ruminatively*). Well, well, well. When did it happen?

THE YOUNG MAN (*With rash curiosity*). When did *what* happen?

THE OLD MAN. Eh?

THE YOUNG MAN (*With great power*). When did *what* happen?

THE OLD MAN. Was it recently?

THE YOUNG MAN. I don't know, sir.

THE OLD MAN. H'm?

THE YOUNG MAN (*Shouting*). I don't know, sir.

THE OLD MAN. Ages ago?

THE YOUNG MAN (*Hopelessly*). Yes, sir—ages ago. (*He starts for home.*)

THE OLD MAN. Is he going to divorce her?

THE YOUNG MAN (*Coming back, considerably surprised and alarmed*). Who, sir?

THE OLD MAN. Eh?

THE YOUNG MAN (*Violently*). Who?

THE OLD MAN. Soon?

THE YOUNG MAN (*With incredible lung-power*). No, sir—*whooo?*

THE OLD MAN (*In the voice of one answering an unnecessarily stupid question*). Why, Jim!

THE YOUNG MAN. (*He feels that the thing has gone too far and determines at all costs to put it right. He draws up another chair and sits down beside the* OLD MAN.) I'm afraid, sir, that you haven't been hearing me rightly.

THE OLD MAN. H'm?

THE YOUNG MAN (*Angrily*). You haven't been hearing me *rightly*.

THE OLD MAN. T'ck, t'ck, t'ck—every night! That's bad.

THE YOUNG MAN. No, sir, *rightly*—not nightly! (*He kneels down beside the* OLD MAN *and then, taking a deep breath, he injects his words straight into the aged ear.*) I was only talking about the weather *in the first place.*

THE OLD MAN (*More interested every minute*). Which is that?

THE YOUNG MAN (*Screaming*). Do, please, sir, try to understand. I say that I've simply been talking about the *weather.*

THE OLD MAN (*Impatiently*). Yes, yes, I heard all that. But is he going to divorce her?

THE YOUNG MAN (*To himself*). Oh, God.

THE OLD MAN. I can't quite *hear* you. What is it?

THE YOUNG MAN (*With a Herculean yell*). I said nothing, sir, I SAID NOTHING.

THE OLD MAN. No, no, no—I won't say a word.

THE YOUNG MAN (*In a frenzy*). I've simply been telling you that it's a lovely *day.*

THE OLD MAN. What do people say?

THE YOUNG MAN. NOTHING, SIR.

THE OLD MAN. H'm?

THE YOUNG MAN. THEY DON'T SAY ANYTHING.

THE OLD MAN. No, no, no, I promise you—I won't repeat a word.

THE YOUNG MAN (*Beside himself*). There's nothing to repeat, sir.

THE OLD MAN. There's what?

THE YOUNG MAN. THERE'S NOTHING TO *REPEAT.*

THE OLD MAN (*Much intrigued*). He met her on the street?

THE YOUNG MAN (*Fast losing his sanity*). No, sir, no, NO, NO—*THEY DON'T EXIST.*

THE OLD MAN. Eh?

THE YOUNG MAN. THEY DON'T EXIST.

THE OLD MAN (*More fascinated than ever*). He kissed her on the street?

THE YOUNG MAN. NO, NO, NO, *NO!!!*

THE OLD MAN. No?

THE YOUNG MAN. YES—*NO.*

THE OLD MAN. He didn't kiss her on the street?

THE YOUNG MAN. HE NEVER KISSED HER AT ALL!

THE OLD MAN. What's that?

THE YOUNG MAN. *HE NEVER KISSED HER AT ALL!*

THE OLD MAN. At a ball?

THE YOUNG MAN (*Losing all self-control*). *FOR THE LAST TIME*, sir,—*YOU DIDNT HEAR WHAT I SAID TO START WITH!!!*

THE OLD MAN (*Blandly*). Eh?

The YOUNG MAN *screams and—hurling himself upon the* OLD MAN*—yields to the impulse against which he has long been struggling. He strangles him.*

The OLD MAN *falls untidily across the arm of his chair. He expires.*

The YOUNG MAN *glances at him, fixes his tie and looks at his watch.*

THE YOUNG MAN (*Irritably*). Why on earth didn't I do that to begin with?

The YOUNG MAN *at last goes out to keep his appointment.*

TWO MODERN VERSIONS OF THE BALCONY SCENE FROM ROMEO AND JULIET

1. IN THE MANNER OF THE UNDEMONSTRATIVE ENGLISHMAN.[1]

ACT II.—SCENE 2

CAPULET'S ORCHARD

ROMEO (*who has just climbed the wall*). All very well to laugh if you don't know what it is. What I mean is I've got it in the neck. There she is at the window. Some kid!

JULIET (*to herself*). What rot it all is!

ROMEO (*sotto voce*). That's right, little girl. Get it off your chest.

[1] Reprinted with the permission of *Punch*.

JULIET. It's too putrid that he should belong to that Montagu set.

ROMEO (*to himself*). Shall I butt in now, or wait and see?

JULIET (*still failing to observe the intruder*). What does it matter about his people being rank outsiders if he's decent? And one never need see much of one's relations. Of course his name is against him, but I could call him Bunny or something.

ROMEO (*coming forward from under the shadow of the trees*). Right-oh! I'll answer to Bunny with the greatest of pleasure.

JULIET. Who are you?

ROMEO. Bunny, old thing, just Bunny.

JULIET. Don't be absurd. I know your voice. You're Mr. Montagu. How did you get in here? Didn't you see the notice about trespassers being prosecuted?

ROMEO. Oh, that's all bunkum. They've got to prove you've done some material damage.

JULIET. Father would be most fearfully peeved if he found you here.

ROMEO. I daresay. But the fact is, I thought you and I rather clicked at your party.

JULIET. Did I look nice?

ROMEO. Oh, topping! I say, you don't exactly object to me, do you?

JULIET. Well, if you heard me maundering away to myself just now you must know that much. If you want us to be pals I'm on. Sure you're not just gassing?

ROMEO. Rather.

JULIET. Really and truly?

ROMEO. I'll swear it if you like.

JULIET. No, you needn't do that. I'll take your word for it. But aren't we rather rushing things? Better be getting on now, hadn't you? Night, night!

ROMEO. No. I say, look here—you're not going to leave me on the mat?

JULIET. It's a bit late.

ROMEO. Yes, I know. What I mean is—you do like me?

JULIET. Rather! Yes, awfully. There's that old nurse of mine calling. Half-a-mo!

NURSE (*off*). Miss Juliet!

JULIET. Coming! (*Exit.*)

ROMEO. This is distinctly jolly.

(*Reënter* JULIET *above.*)

JULIET. If you really aren't rotting you can see about a license to-morrow.

NURSE (*off*). Miss Juliet!

JULIET. Bother! Coming! But if you're just playing about I'm not having any.

NURSE. Miss Juliet!

JULIET. All right. What I mean is—you get me ——?

ROMEO. Quite.

JULIET. Cheery-oh! (*Exit.*)

ROMEO. What's your hurry? Heaps of time.

(*He retires slowly.*)

JULIET (*reappearing*). Hi! Bunny! I can't shout or I shall wake the whole house. Bunny!

ROMEO. Yes, old thing?

JULIET. If I send someone round to-morrow what time will you be in?

ROMEO. What about nine?

JULIET. Good. I've forgotten what I was going to say.

ROMEO. Take your time.

JULIET. It's your fault. It confuses me to have you standing there gaping. Bunny, I'm only rotting. I quite like it really.

ROMEO. Do you, old thing? That's topping. I can stay a good bit longer if you like.

JULIET. No, you really mustn't. It's fearfully late, and if we're not careful we shall be getting soppy.

BOTH (*together*). We mustn't get soppy.

JULIET. You'd better hop it. So long, Bunny.

ROMEO. So long, kid. I'll see the registrar first thing. Cheery-oh!

(*He hops it.*)

2. IN THE MANNER OF OCTAVUS ROY COHEN.[1]

Clarence Mansfield Lindsay

Discovered: JULIET WASHINGTON LEE *on rear balcony of Sally Crouch's Cozy Home Hotel, in Birmingham, Alabama. Enter* ROMEO PICKETT JACKSON, *via the back fence; he advances stealthily in the shade of the shrubbery.*

JULIET (*sighing deeply*). Lawsy me! What a perfec'ly splendiferous moon! All I needs is a man!

ROMEO (*aside*). Hot dawg! She referrin' to me? (*Aloud.*) Angel gal, announce somethin' more!

JULIET (*alarmed*). Who this intrudin' on my solitariness?

ROMEO. Reckon you knows me, Julie!

JULIET. Well, if 'tain't Rummy Jackson! Say, nerve is the one thing you ain't got nothin' else but! Is you 'ware 'at my Aunt Sally vow she goin' to 'nihilate any o' the Jackson fambly as comes pesterin' roun' heah?

ROMEO. Jus' cause my Unc' Lucifer done her outn two weeks boa'd! That woman is sure pizen, carbolic acid ain't got nothin' on her! But listen! I kain't sleep nights for thinkin' o' you, Julie! You is the onliest gal in Bummin'ham!

JULIET. Man, you says words, but they don't mean nothin'!

ROMEO. Listen at me swear by the moon ——

JULIET. Don't you swear by the moon! Tha's the most pestiferous bad luck!

ROMEO. Hot dam! How I goin' to swear then?

JULIET. Don't swear 'tall! 'Tain't perlite 'fore ladies, nohow. (*Leaning over balcony rail.*) Oh, Rummy, Rummy! Wherefo' is yo' what yo' is 'stead o' what yo' ain't? Reckon a snowball by any other name'd smell as salumptious!

ROMEO. Does yo' get it? I done split a en-tire bottle o' imported perfume on me 'fore startin' out. (*Begins to climb lattice.*)

[1] Reprinted from the *Saturday Evening Post*, with the permission of the author. NOTE: This playlet may not be produced publicly without the author's permission.

JULIET. Should my Aunt Sally cotch us heah together each with the other she jus' nat'rally lam the stuffin' outn the bofe o' us!

ROMEO. She ain't gwine to cotch us! Golly! This lattice ain't fit for no cullud man to trust hisself to! (*Clasping* JULIET *in his arms.*) Honey, does yo' love yo' Rummy?

JULIET (*simpering*). I don't dast to tell yo'!

ROMEO (*kissing her*). Julie, yo' meet me ter-morrer afternoon down by Bud Peagler's pool parlour; I'll be waitin' in my new gol' and silver taxicab an' ——

JULIET. Has yo' got a taxicab?

ROMEO. Uh-huh. A swell-elegant one! I gits me mo' tips ev'y day'n Epic Peters does in a week's po'terin'!

AUNT SALLY (*heard within*). Juliet Washington Lee, if yo' is moonin' out deah on de balcony, yo' come right in an' he'p wid the ironin'!

JULIET. Deah she is! Good-night, Rummy!

ROMEO. Sayin' good-night to yo', Julie, is such a sweetness I reckon as how I'll jus' keep on sayin' it till I gits me into trouble! Honey, is yo' goin' to meet me ter-morrer?

JULIET. If the objectoriness of yo' love is hon'ble; an' yo' means gittin' hitched ——

ROMEO. That's the onliest thing I does mean! There ain' no gal in Bummin'ham c'd git me goin' like you'!

JULIET. Tickle my tongue, but yo' shuah talks flossy! But min' now, no fumadiddles!

ROMEO (*descending*). Says which? (*Lattice breaks; he falls heavily to ground.*)

JULIET. Oh, Rummy! Is yo' hu't?

ROMEO (*groaning*). I is shuah busted infernally!

AUNT SALLY (*heard within*). What yo' doin', Juliet Washington Lee? Yo' come right in heah!

(ROMEO *rises with alacrity and beats a retreat.*)

JULIET. Oh, yo' Rummy! Hsst! At ha' pas' fo', ter-morrer! Remember!

ROMEO. I ain't fergittin'! (*Aside as he mounts the wall*) Jus' the same, if I kain't borrer ten dollars to pay the pa'son, I won't be on han'!

CURTAIN

THE WOULD-BE GENTLEMAN [1]

Molière

[In his *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, Molière satirizes the rich but ignorant tradesman who plans to turn nobleman. To this end, the parvenu, Jourdain, employs masters of fencing, dancing, and music, and a professor of philosophy to perfect him in the accomplishments of a gentleman. But these four come to blows in a heated argument over the relative importance of their respective arts. Immediately following this quarrel comes Scene 6 of Act II, given here in translation.]

PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY (*Straightening his coat*). Let us proceed to our lesson.

JOURDAIN. Oh! My dear sir, I am so sorry they beat you up that way.

PROF. (*Adjusting his collar*). That is nothing, I assure you. A philosopher must know how to take things as they come, and I am going to write a satire in the manner of Juvenal against them which will dispose of them in great style. But enough of that. What do you wish to learn?

JOURDAIN. Everything I can, for I have the greatest desire in the world to be learned; I am furious that my father and mother didn't make me study a little of everything when I was young.

PROF. (*By now fully restored to his professorial dignity*). That is a reasonable feeling. *Nam, sine doctrina, vita est quasi mortis imago.* You understand that, and you know Latin, no doubt.

JOURDAIN (*Hesitatingly*). Yes, but proceed as if I didn't know it. Explain what that means.

PROF. That means that *Without knowledge life is almost an image of death.*

JOURDAIN (*With conviction*). That Latin is sensible.

PROF. Have you some principles, some rudiments of knowledge?

JOURDAIN. Yes, indeed! I know how to read and write.

PROF. Where do you wish to begin? Do you want me to teach you logic?

[1] Translated by Mary-Margaret H. Barr.

JOURDAIN. And what's logic?

PROF. It is that which explains the three functions of the mind.

JOURDAIN. What are they, these three functions of the mind?

PROF. (*Falling into his best lecture style*). The first, the second, and the third. The first is to conceive well by means of the universals; the second, to judge correctly by means of the categories; and the third, to reach a correct conclusion by means of the figures: Barbara, Celarent, Darii, Ferio, Baralipton, etc.

JOURDAIN (*Shaking his head*). Those words are too barbarous. That logic doesn't suit me. Let's learn something nicer than that.

PROF. Do you wish to learn ethics?

JOURDAIN. Ethics?

PROF. Yes.

JOURDAIN. What's ethics about?

PROF. It treats of happiness, it teaches men to control their passions and . . .

JOURDAIN (*With decision*). No, I don't want that. I'm as bad-tempered as the devil, and no ethics will help it. I want to lose my temper when and as much as I like.

PROF. How would you like to study physics?

JOURDAIN. What's it all about, this physics?

PROF. (*Grandiloquently*). Physics is that science which explains the principles of things natural and the properties of matter; which treats of the nature of the elements, metals, minerals, stones, plants, and animals; and teaches us the causes of all the meteors, of the rainbow, the will-o'-the-wisp, lightning, thunder, rain, snow, hail, winds, and cyclones.

JOURDAIN (*Despairingly*). That's too deep for me!

PROF. What, then, do you wish me to teach you?

JOURDAIN (*With animation*). Teach me spelling.

PROF. With pleasure.

JOURDAIN. Then you will teach me the almanac so I'll know when there's a moon and when there isn't.

PROF. Very well. Then to follow your thought through and to handle the problem in a truly learned way, we must begin with an accurate knowledge of the nature of the letters and of the different ways of producing them. In this connection, I must tell you that the letters are divided into vowels, so-called because they are pro-

duced by the voice; and into consonants, so-called because they are sounded with the vowels, and only mark the different articulations of the vowels. There are five vowels: A, E, I, O, U.[1]

JOURDAIN. I understand all that. (*Delightedly.*)

PROF. The vowel A is formed by opening the mouth very wide: A.

JOURDAIN. A, A. Yes.

PROF. The vowel E is formed by slightly closing the mouth: E.

JOURDAIN (*Booming forth*). A, E, A, E. (*Highly pleased.*) Why, yes! Ah! how nice that is!

PROF. And the vowel I, by bringing the jaws still closer together and stretching the corners of the mouth toward the ears: A, E, I.

JOURDAIN. A, E, I, I, I, I. That's right! Hooray for learning!

PROF. The vowel O is formed by opening the mouth and rounding both lips: O.

JOURDAIN. O, O. There's nothing better than that. (*Elated and stressing the I.*) A, E, I, O, I, O. That's great! I, O, I, O.

PROF. The opening of the mouth is just the shape of an O.

JOURDAIN (*In an experimental manner*). O, O, O. You're right, O. (*Greatly delighted.*) Ah! how wonderful it is to know something!

PROF. The vowel U is formed by bringing the teeth almost, but not quite, together, and by rounding the lips: U.

JOURDAIN. U, U. Nothing truer than that. U.

PROF. Your lips protrude as for a pout, so, if you want to make a face at someone, you have only to say U.

JOURDAIN. U, U. That's right. (*Remorsefully.*) Oh, why didn't I study sooner so as to know all that!

PROF. Tomorrow we shall try the other letters, which are the consonants.

JOURDAIN. Are there other things as queer as these?

PROF. Certainly. The consonant D, for example, is pronounced by placing the tip of the tongue against the upper teeth: DA.

JOURDAIN. DA, DA. Yes. Ah! What wonderful things! wonderful!

PROF. The F, by pressing the upper teeth against the lower lip: FA.

JOURDAIN. FA, FA. That's the truth. Ah, my father and mother, what a grudge I have against you!

PROF. And the R, by placing the tongue against the roof of the

[1] For present purposes, these vowels may be given the following sounds: a as in father, e as in they, i as in machine, o as in old, u as in unit. An exaggerated expression of these sounds will heighten the humorous effect.

mouth, so that when it is touched by a rapid expulsion of air, it vibrates in a sort of trill: R, RA.

JOURDAIN. R, R, RA, R, R, R, R, R, RA. That's right. Oh, what a clever man you are, and how much time I've lost! R, R, R, RA.

PROF. I shall explain all these peculiarities at length.

JOURDAIN. Please do so. But now, I have a secret to tell you. I'm in love with a lady in high society; and I want you to help me write her a note which I shall drop at her feet.

PROF. Very well.

JOURDAIN. That will be courtly indeed.

PROF. Without doubt. Do you wish to address her in verse?

JOURDAIN (*Decidedly*). No, indeed, no verse.

PROF. Then you wish only prose?

JOURDAIN (*More decidedly*). No, I want neither prose nor verse.

PROF. It must be one or the other.

JOURDAIN (*In amazement*). Why?

PROF. For the excellent reason, sir, that we have only prose or verse in which to express our thought.

JOURDAIN (*Incredulously*). There is nothing but prose or verse?

PROF. Indeed, sir, everything which is not prose is verse, and everything which is not verse is prose.

JOURDAIN. And what is it when we talk?

PROF. Prose.

JOURDAIN. What! When I say, "Nicole, bring me my bedroom slippers and my nightcap," that's prose?

PROF. Yes, sir.

JOURDAIN. Upon my word, for more than forty years, I've been talking prose without knowing a thing about it. I certainly am grateful to you for having taught me that. Now, I want to say in my note: *Beautiful marchioness, your beautiful eyes make me die of love*; but I want it put in a courtly and graceful way.

PROF. Say that the flames of her heart reduce your heart to ashes, that you endure day and night, for her sake, the tortures of a . . .

JOURDAIN (*Emphatically*). No, mercy no! I don't want all that. I want only what I told you: *Beautiful marchioness, your beautiful eyes make me die of love.*

PROF. The thought should be developed a little.

JOURDAIN. No, I tell you; I want only those words in the note, but I

want them fashionably and properly arranged. Please tell me the different ways in which they may be arranged.

PROF. They can be arranged, first, as you said: *Beautiful marchioness, your beautiful eyes make me die of love.* Or: *Of love die me make, beautiful marchioness, your beautiful eyes.* Or again: *Your beautiful eyes of love make me, beautiful marchioness, die.* Still another way: *Die your beautiful eyes, beautiful marchioness, of love make me.* And still another way: *Me make your beautiful eyes die, beautiful marchioness, of love.*

JOURDAIN (*Very earnestly*). But, which of these ways is the best?

PROF. The one you gave at first: *Beautiful marchioness, your beautiful eyes make me die of love.*

JOURDAIN (*Highly pleased*). And to think that I have never studied, and that I thought of that the very first thing! I thank you with all my heart, and please do come early tomorrow.

PROF. (*Very deferentially*). I shall not fail to do so.

TWO SLAPS IN THE FACE[1]

Ferenc Molnar

(Translated by Benjamin Glazer)

A Budapest street at two o'clock on a sunny autumn afternoon. JULES *and* ALFRED *are walking home from school, carrying their books under their arms. Neither is quite seventeen.*

JULES. You haven't said a word for ten minutes.

ALFRED. No.

JULES. Don't you feel well?

ALFRED. I'm all right.

JULES. You've been depressed all day.

ALFRED. Yes. . . . I'm depressed.

[1] With the permission of Dr. Edmond Pauker. NOTE: No public performance is allowed without special authorization of the author's representative, Dr. Edmond Pauker, 1639 Broadway, New York City.

JULES. Why?

ALFRED. Because women are so deceitful. (*There is a pause.*)

JULES. You mean Vilma?

ALFRED. Of course . . . Vilma. Who else? (*Another pause.*)

JULES. What has she done?

ALFRED. She hasn't done anything special. She is deceitful, that's all. Women are all alike.

JULES. What happened, anyhow?

ALFRED. You know that water tower on Marguerite Island?

JULES. Yes.

ALFRED. Lots of fellows and girls meet there in the evening. She and I used to meet there, too.

JULES. At the water tower?

ALFRED. Yes. At six every afternoon. She'd say she had a music lesson, and I'd say I was going to the library, and we'd meet at the tower and go walking under the trees, as all lovers do; only ours was an innocent affair, for I never even kissed her, because she was afraid someone might see us. No, I'd only take her arm, and we'd walk along and talk about the future, when we'd be married, and things like that. And sometimes we'd quarrel about her music teacher. I was a little jealous of him. I tried to make Vilma jealous, too, but she'd never show her jealousy. She's too clever. But she loves me. . . .

JULES. Yes, but what happened?

ALFRED. I'm coming to that. . . . So we always met at the water tower until one day her mother intercepted a letter. It was my own fault. I didn't have to write a letter at all, much less put the water tower in it. I could have written "the usual place," but, like a fool, I wrote "the water tower." Well, her mother intercepted the letter, but never said a word to Vilma about it. And the next afternoon she watches Vilma tying a new hair ribbon in a double bow, and when Vilma says, "Music lesson," she pretends to believe her and lets her go without a word. But she follows her. You see?

JULES. Oh!

ALFRED. It was terrible. There I stood in front of the tower, never suspecting a thing. And Vilma came up. "Hello!" "Hello!" we said to each other, and arm in arm we walked toward the trees.

I asked her if she loved me, and she said of course she did. I asked her if she loved me very much, and she said, "Very much." I said, "I adore you." And she said, "Not as much as I adore you." I said: "It is impossible for anyone to be adored as much as I adore you." And at that moment her mother rushes up like a bull.

JULES. How do you mean, like a bull?

ALFRED. Like a female bull. She rushed up and planted herself in front of us. I felt like running away, but I couldn't leave Vilma alone in trouble. . . . She just stood there, glaring at both of us. She never said a word to me. She couldn't; she doesn't know me. But she grabbed hold of Vilma, and shrieked: "So this is your music lesson! So this is why you put a new ribbon in your hair!" Poor Vilma couldn't say a word. She only stood there, trembling. Then, suddenly, that wild bull of a mother raised her hand, and, before I could prevent it, she gave Vilma a slap in the face . . . an awful slap in the face.

JULES. In the face?

ALFRED. Right in the face! And before I could say a word she had grabbed Vilma by the hand and led her away. There I stood looking after them. I can't explain to you how badly I felt. But I loved Vilma more than ever, because I knew how humiliated she must feel, having her face slapped like that in my presence. So I went home.

JULES. Is that all?

ALFRED. No. The worst is yet to come. Next day I wrote to Vilma, asking her to meet me at the tower on Thursday. I reasoned it would be safer than ever now, because, after what had happened, her mother would never suppose she'd meet me again.

JULES. Did she come?

ALFRED. Certainly she came. She cried as if her heart would break. I knew she'd be humiliated. She kept repeating over and over again: "If she only hadn't done it in front of you! If she had slapped me at home I wouldn't have minded half so much." Nothing I could say seemed to console her. Vilma is an awfully proud girl. She didn't stay very long. She had to go home. And as I was going home myself, an idea came to me.

JULES. What was that?

ALFRED. An idea of how to make it up to her for the slap she got on my account.

JULES. How?

ALFRED. If I hadn't written that stupid letter her mother would never have slapped her in my presence. Well, the only way to make it up to her was to have my father slap me in her presence. Do you see?

JULES. No.

ALFRED. Very simple. I wrote my father an anonymous letter in a disguised hand. "Dear Sir, every day at six your son meets a girl at the water tower on Marguerite Island. If you don't believe me, go there and watch for him, and box the young scoundrel's ears, as he deserves." Signed, "A Friend."

JULES. Did you send it to him?

ALFRED. Certainly. That suggestion about boxing the young scoundrel's ears wasn't strictly necessary. I know my father pretty well; and I was almost certain that, if he caught me, he'd hit me of his own accord. But I had to make absolutely sure, so as to be even with Vilma. She gets one from her mother as a lady; I get one from my father as a gentleman; then there is no reason for her to feel humiliated any longer. Wasn't that the chivalrous thing to do?

JULES. Absolutely.

ALFRED. A gentleman could do no less.

JULES. No.

ALFRED. I sent the letter, and I could see in father's face that he had got it, all right. He kept his eye on me all afternoon, and at a quarter to six, when I was going out, he asked me where I was going. I said: "To the library." And, sure enough, when I left the house he followed me, keeping about a block behind on the side of the street. I was pleased. I reached the tower and waited. Father came up on the other side and hid himself among the trees. I pretended not to see him. In about five minutes Vilma came. "Hello! Hello!" we said to each other. "How are you? . . . Do you love me? . . . I love you." . . . I took her arm and led her toward the trees. And when we get there the old man pounces down on me. "Library, eh? You young scamp!" He gives me a choice line of language, and before he had finished—exactly as I

had planned it—he gives me a nice ringing slap on the face with his open hand. "Come along now!" he roars, and leads me away. But as we went he raised his hat politely to Vilma. It was a courteous act. I respect him for it.

JULES. Yes, it was.

ALFRED. The next day I meet Vilma again. What do you suppose she does? She laughs at me.

JULES. Laughs?

ALFRED. Laughs! . . . She said the expression on my face when father slapped me was the most comical thing she had ever seen. And she began laughing all over again. . . . Then I told her how I had planned the whole thing myself. I showed her a copy of the letter, and explained how I had humiliated myself to make it up to her for her own humiliation, and that it was nothing to laugh about; but she only went on laughing and laughing like a silly fool. And when I reproached her, she said: "I can't help it. Since I saw your father slap you I can't respect you any more."

JULES. Is that what she said?

ALFRED. Would you believe it? . . . Yes. . . . I felt my face getting redder and redder. I couldn't say another word. And when she saw how humiliated I was, she became a bit sorry for me. "If you knew how ridiculous you looked when he slapped you," she explained. "It's no use for me to try ever to love you again. I couldn't. I'm quite disillusioned." Then she started giggling all over again, and I walked away. I can still hear her laughing.

JULES. And now it's all over?

ALFRED. All over. (*There is a pause.*)

JULES. She's not worth grieving about. She's fickle.

ALFRED. They're all like that. . . . What's the use of being chivalrous? You let yourself be slapped in the face for them, and they only laugh at you.

JULES. You'd think she'd love you all the more, after a sacrifice like that.

ALFRED. Yes, that's the baffling part of it. After her wild mother slapped her I loved her more than ever before . . . and respected her more, too. But she—she—It's so unreasonable! I don't understand it at all.

JULES. Neither do I. (*They walk on, shaking their heads dolefully.*)

A CONNUBIAL ECLOGUE [1]

John Godfrey Saxe

HE

Much lately have I thought, my darling wife,
Some simple rules might make our wedded life
As pleasant always as a morn in May;
I merely name it,—what does Molly say?

SHE

Agreed: your plan I heartily approve;
Rules would be nice,—but who shall make them, love?
Nay, do not speak!—let this the bargain be,
One shall be made by you, and one by me,
Till all are done ——

HE

—Your plan is surely fair,
In such a work 'tis fitting we should share;
And now—although it matters not a pin—
If you have no objection, I'll begin.

SHE

Proceed! In making laws I'm little versed;
And as to words, I do not mind the first;
I only claim—and hold the treasure fast—
My sex's sacred privilege, the last!

HE

With all my heart. Well, dearest, to begin:—
When by our cheerful hearth our friends drop in,
And I am talking in my brilliant style
(The rest with rapture listening the while)

[1] Reprinted from *The Masquerade.*

About the war,—or anything, in short,
That you're aware is my especial *forte*,—
Pray don't get up a circle of your own,
And talk of bonnets, in an undertone!

SHE

That's Number One; I'll mind it well if you
Will do as much, my dear, by Number Two:
When we attend a party or a ball,
Don't leave your Molly standing by the wall,
The helpless victim of the dreariest bore
That ever walked upon a parlor-floor,
While you—oblivious of your spouse's doom—
Flirt with the girls,—the gayest in the room!

HE

When I (although the busiest man alive)
Have snatched an hour to take a pleasant drive,
And say, "Remember at precisely four—
You'll find the carriage ready at the door,"
Don't keep me waiting half an hour or so,
And then declare, "The clock must be too slow!"

SHE

When you (such things have happened now and then)
Go to the Club with, "I'll be back at ten,"
And stay till two o'clock, you needn't say,
"I really was the first to come away;
'Tis very strange how swift the time has passed:
I'm sure, my dear, the clock must be too fast!"

HE

There—that will do; what else remains to say
We may consider at a future day;
I'm getting sleepy—and—if you have done—

SHE

Not I!—this making rules is precious fun;
Now here's another:—When you paint to me

"That charming woman" you are sure to see,
Don't—when you praise the virtues she has got—
Name only those you think your wife has not!
And here's a rule I hope you won't forget,
The most important I have mentioned yet,—
Pray mind it well:—Whenever you incline
To bring your queer companions home to dine,
Suppose, my dear,—Good Gracious! he's asleep!
Ah! well,—'tis lucky good advice will keep;
And he shall have it, or, upon my life,
I'm not the proper spirit of a wife!

THE WOOING OF KATHERINE [1]

PETRUCHIO. Good morrow, Kate; for that's your name, I hear.
KATHERINE. Well have you heard, but something hard of hearing:
They call me Katherine, that do talk of me.
PETRUCHIO. You lie, in faith; for you are call'd plain Kate,
And bonny Kate, and sometimes Kate the curst;
But Kate, the prettiest Kate in Christendom;
Kate of Kate-Hall; my super-dainty Kate,
For dainties are all Kates: and therefore, Kate,
Take this of me, Kate of my consolation;
Hearing thy mildness praised in every town,
Thy virtues spoke of, and thy beauty sounded,—
Yet not so deeply as to thee belongs,—
Myself am moved to woo thee for my wife.
KATHERINE. Moved! in good time: let him that moved you hither
Remove you hence: I knew you at the first,
You were a moveable.
PETRUCHIO. Why, what's a moveable?
KATHERINE. A join'd-stool.

[1] From *The Taming of the Shrew.*

PETRUCHIO. Alas, good Kate, I will not burden thee!
For, knowing thee to be but young and light,—
KATHERINE. Too light for such a swain as you to catch:
And yet as heavy as my weight should be.
PETRUCHIO. Should be! should—buzz!
KATHERINE. Well ta'en and like a buzzard.
PETRUCHIO. O slow-wing'd turtle! shall a buzzard take thee?
KATHERINE. Ay, for a turtle, as he takes a buzzard.
PETRUCHIO. Come, come, you wasp: i' faith, you are too angry.
KATHERINE. If I be waspish, best beware my sting.
PETRUCHIO. My remedy is, then, to pluck it out.
KATHERINE. Ay, if the fool could find it where it lies.
PETRUCHIO. Who knows not where a wasp does wear his sting? In his tail.
KATHERINE. In his tongue.
PETRUCHIO. Whose tongue?
KATHERINE. Yours, and so farewell.
PETRUCHIO. What, nay, come again,
Good Kate: I am a gentleman.
KATHERINE. Then I'll try. (*She strikes him.*)
PETRUCHIO. I swear I'll cuff you, if you strike again.
KATHERINE. So may you lose your arms:
If you strike me, you are no gentleman;
And if no gentleman, why then no arms.
PETRUCHIO. A herald, Kate? O, put me in thy books!
KATHERINE. What is your crest? a coxcomb?
PETRUCHIO. A combless cock, so Kate will be my hen.
KATHERINE. No cock of mine: you crow too like a craven.
PETRUCHIO. Nay, come, Kate, come: you must not look so sour.
KATHERINE. It is my fashion, when I see a crab.
PETRUCHIO. Why, here's no crab; and therefore look not sour.
KATHERINE. There is, there is.
PETRUCHIO. Then show it me.
KATHERINE. Had I a glass, I would.
PETRUCHIO. What, you mean my face?
KATHERINE. Well aim'd of such a young one.
PETRUCHIO. Now, by Saint George, I am too young for you.
KATHERINE. Yet you are wither'd.

PETRUCHIO. 'Tis with cares.
KATHERINE. —I care not.
PETRUCHIO. Nay, hear you, Kate: in sooth you 'scape not so.
KATHERINE. I chafe you, if I tarry: let me go.
PETRUCHIO. No, not a whit: I find you passing gentle.
'Twas told me you were rough and coy and sullen,
And now I find report a very liar;
For thou art pleasant, gamesome, passing courteous,
But slow in speech, yet sweet as spring-time flowers:
Thou canst not frown, thou canst not look askance,
Nor bite the lip, as angry wenches will;
Nor hast thou pleasure to be cross in talk;
But thou with mildness entertain'st thy wooers,
With gentle conference, soft and affable.
Why does the world report that Kate doth limp?
O slanderous world! Kate, like the hazel-twig,
Is straight and slender, and as brown in hue
As hazel-nut and sweeter than the kernels.
O let me see thee walk: thou dost not halt.
KATHERINE. Go, fool, and whom thou keep'st command.
PETRUCHIO. Did ever Dian so become a grove
As Kate this chamber with her princely gait?
O! be thou Dian, and let her be Kate:
And then let Kate be chaste and Dian sportful!
KATHERINE. Where did you study all this goodly speech?
PETRUCHIO. It is extempore, from my mother-wit.
KATHERINE. A witty mother! witless else her son.
PETRUCHIO. Am I not wise?
KATHERINE. Yes: keep you warm.
PETRUCHIO. Marry, so I mean to, sweet Katherine.
And therefore, setting all this chat aside,
Thus in plain terms: your father hath consented
That you shall be my wife; your dowry 'greed on;
And, will you, nill you, I will marry you.
Now, Kate, I am a husband for your turn;
For, by this light, whereby I see thy beauty,—
Thy beauty, that doth make me like thee well,—
Thou must be married to no man but me;

For I am he am born to tame you, Kate,
And bring you from a wild Kate to a Kate
Conformable as other household Kates.
Here comes your father: never make denial;
I must and will have Katherine to my wife.

THE RIVALS

Richard Brinsley Sheridan

Act I

Scene II: *A Dressing-room in* Mrs. Malaprop's *Lodgings.* Lydia *sitting on a sofa, with a book in her hand.*

Enter Mrs. Malaprop, *and* Sir Anthony Absolute.

MRS. MAL. There, Sir Anthony, there sits the deliberate simpleton who wants to disgrace her family, and lavish herself on a fellow not worth a shilling.

LYD. Madam, I thought you once ——

MRS. MAL. You thought, miss! I don't know any business you have to think at all—thought does not become a young woman. But the point we would request of you is, that you will promise to forget this fellow—to illiterate him, I say, quite from your memory.

LYD. Ah, madam! our memories are independent of our wills. It is not so easy to forget.

MRS. MAL. But I say it is, miss; there is nothing on earth so easy as to forget, if a person chooses to set about it. I'm sure I have as much forgot your poor dear uncle as if he had never existed—and I thought it my duty so to do; and let me tell you, Lydia, these violent memories don't become a young woman.

SIR ANTH. Why sure she won't pretend to remember what she's ordered not!—ay, this comes of her reading!

LYD. What crime, madam, have I committed, to be treated thus?

MRS. MAL. Now don't attempt to extirpate yourself from the matter; you know I have proof controvertible of it.—But tell me, will you

promise to do as you're bid? Will you take a husband of your friends' choosing?

LYD. Madam, I must tell you plainly, that had I no preference for any one else, the choice you have made would be my aversion.

MRS. MAL. What business have you, miss, with preference and aversion? They don't become a young woman; and you ought to know, that as both always wear off, 'tis safest in matrimony to begin with a little aversion. I am sure I hated your poor dear uncle before marriage as if he'd been a blackamoor—and yet, miss, you are sensible what a wife I made!—and when it pleased Heaven to release me from him, 'tis unknown what tears I shed!—But suppose we were going to give you another choice, will you promise us to give up this Beverley?

LYD. Could I belie my thoughts so far as to give that promise, my actions would certainly as far belie my words.

MRS. MAL. Take yourself to your room.—You are fit company for nothing but your own ill humours.

LYD. Willingly, ma'am—I cannot change for the worse. (*Exit.*)

MRS. MAL. There 's a little intricate hussy for you!

SIR ANTH. It is not to be wondered at, ma'am,—all this is the natural consequence of teaching girls to read. Had I a thousand daughters, by Heaven! I'd as soon have them taught the black art as their alphabet!

MRS. MAL. Nay, nay, Sir Anthony, you are an absolute misanthropy.

SIR ANTH. In my way hither, Mrs. Malaprop, I observed your niece's maid coming forth from a circulating library!—She had a book in each hand—they were half-bound volumes, with marble covers! —From that moment I guessed how full of duty I should see her mistress!

MRS. MAL. Those are vile places, indeed!

SIR ANTH. Madam, a circulating library in a town is as an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge! It blossoms through the year!—And depend on it, Mrs. Malaprop, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves, will long for the fruit at last.

MRS. MAL. Fie, fie, Sir Anthony! you surely speak laconically.

SIR ANTH. Why, Mrs. Malaprop, in moderation, now, what would you have a woman know?

MRS. MAL. Observe me, Sir Anthony. I would by no means wish a

daughter of mine to be a progeny of learning; I don't think so much learning becomes a young woman; for instance, I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or algebra, or simony, or fluxions, or paradoxes, or such inflammatory branches of learning—neither would it be necessary for her to handle any of your mathematical, astronomical, diabolical instruments.—But, Sir Anthony, I would send her, at nine years old, to a boarding-school, in order to learn a little ingenuity and artifice. Then, sir, she should have a supercilious knowledge in accounts;—and as she grew up, I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries;—but above all, Sir Anthony, she should be mistress of orthodoxy, that she might not misspell and mispronounce words so shamefully as girls usually do; and likewise that she might reprehend the true meaning of what she is saying. This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know;—and I don't think there is a superstitious article in it.

SIR ANTH. Well, well, Mrs. Malaprop, I will dispute the point no further with you; though I must confess that you are a truly moderate and polite arguer, for almost every third word you say is on my side of the question. But, Mrs. Malaprop, to the more important point in debate—you say you have no objection to my proposal?

MRS. MAL. None, I assure you. I am under no positive engagement with Mr. Acres, and as Lydia is so obstinate against him, perhaps your son may have better success.

SIR ANTH. Well, madam, I will write for the boy directly. He knows not a syllable of this yet, though I have for some time had the proposal in my head. He is at present with his regiment.

MRS. MAL. We have never seen your son, Sir Anthony; but I hope no objection on his side.

SIR ANTH. Objection!—let him object if he dare!—No, no, Mrs. Malaprop, Jack knows that the least demur puts me in a frenzy directly. My process was always very simple—in their younger days, 'twas "Jack, do this";—if he demurred, I knocked him down—and if he grumbled at that I always sent him out of the room.

MRS. MAL. Ay, and the properest way, o' my conscience!—nothing is so conciliating to young people as severity.—Well, Sir Anthony, I

shall give Mr. Acres his discharge, and prepare Lydia to receive your son's invocations;—and I hope you will represent her to the captain as an object not altogether illegible.

SIR ANTH. Madam, I will handle the subject prudently.—Well, I must leave you; and let me beg you, Mrs. Malaprop, to enforce this matter roundly to the girl.—Take my advice—keep a tight hand: if she rejects this proposal, clap her under lock and key; and if you were just to let the servants forget to bring her dinner for three or four days, you can't conceive how she'd come about.

(*Exit.*)

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

Richard Brinsley Sheridan

LADY TEAZLE *and* SIR PETER.

ACT III. SCENE I.

SIR P. Was ever man so crossed as I am? Every thing conspiring to fret me! I had not been involved in matrimony a fortnight, before her father, a hale and hearty man, died, on purpose, I believe, for the pleasure of plaguing me with the care of his daughter. (LADY TEAZLE *sings without.*) But here comes my helpmate! She appears in great good-humor. How happy I should be if I could tease her into loving me, though but little!

Enter LADY TEAZLE

LADY T. Lud! Sir Peter, I hope you haven't been quarrelling with Maria? It is not using me well to be ill-humored when I am not by.

SIR P. Ah! Lady Teazle, you might have the power to make me good-humored at all times.

LADY T. I am sure I wish I had; for I want you to be in a charming

sweet temper at this moment. Do be good-humored now, and let me have two hundred pounds, will you?

SIR P. Two hundred pounds! What, ain't I to be in a good-humor without paying for it? But speak to me thus, and i' faith there's nothing I could refuse you. You shall have it; (*Gives her notes.*) but seal me a bond of repayment.

LADY T. O no! there, my note of hand will do as well. (*Offering her hand.*)

SIR P. And you shall no longer reproach me with not giving you an independent settlement. I mean shortly to surprise you: but shall we always live thus, hey?

LADY T. If you please. I'm sure I don't care how soon we leave off quarrelling, provided you'll own you were tired first.

SIR P. Well, then let our future contest be, who shall be most obliging.

LADY T. I assure you, Sir Peter, good-nature becomes you. You look now as you did before we were married, when you used to walk with me under the elms, and tell me stories of what a gallant you were in your youth; and chuck me under the chin, you would; and ask me if I thought I could love an old fellow, who would deny me nothing; didn't you?

SIR P. Yes, yes; and you were as kind and attentive—

LADY T. Ay, so I was, and would always take your part, when my acquaintance used to abuse you, and turn you into ridicule.

SIR P. Indeed!

LADY T. Ay, and when my cousin Sophy has called you a stiff, peevish old bachelor, and laughed at me for thinking of marrying one who might be my father, I have always defended you, and said I didn't think you so ugly by any means.

SIR P. Thank you.

LADY T. And I dared say you'd make a very good sort of a husband.

SIR P. And you prophesied right; and we shall now be the happiest couple ——

LADY T. And never differ again. (*Both sit.*)

SIR P. No, never!—though at the same time, indeed, my dear Lady Teazle, you must watch your temper very seriously; for in all our little quarrels, my dear, if you recollect, my love, you always begin.

LADY T. I beg your pardon, my dear Sir Peter; indeed, you always gave the provocation.

SIR P. Now see, my angel! take care,—contradicting isn't the way to keep friends.

LADY T. Then don't you begin it, my love!

SIR P. There, now! you—you are going on. You don't perceive, my life, that you are just doing the very thing which you know always makes me angry.

LADY T. Nay, you know if you will be angry without any reason, my dear ——

SIR P. There! now you want to quarrel again.

LADY T. No, I am sure I don't; but if you will be so peevish ——

SIR P. There now! who begins first?

LADY T. Why, you, to be sure. (*Both start up.*) I said nothing; but there's no bearing your temper.

SIR P. No, no, madam; the fault's in your own temper.

LADY T. Ay, you are just what my cousin Sophy said you would be.

SIR P. Your cousin Sophy is a forward, impertinent gypsy.

LADY T. You are a great bear, I'm sure, to abuse my relations.

SIR P. Now, may all the plagues of marriage be doubled on me, if ever I try to be friends with you any more.

LADY T. So much the better.

SIR P. No, no, madam; 'tis evident you never cared a pin for me, and I was a madman to marry you,—a pert, rural coquette, that had refused half the honest squires in the neighborhood.

LADY T. And I am sure I was a fool to marry you,—an old dangling bachelor, who was single at fifty, only because he never could meet with any one who would have him.

SIR P. Ay, ay, madam; but you were pleased enough to listen to me; you never had such an offer before.

LADY T. No? didn't I refuse Sir Tivy Terrier, who everybody said would have been a better match? for his estate is just as good as yours, and he has broke his neck since we have been married.

SIR P. I have done with you, madam! You are an unfeeling, ungrateful—but there's an end of everything. I believe you capable of everything that is bad. Yes, madam, I now believe the reports relative to you and Charles, madam. Yes, madam, *you* and Charles are—not without grounds ——

LADY T. Take care, Sir Peter! you had better not insinuate any such thing! I'll not be suspected without cause, I promise you.

SIR P. Very well, madam! very well! A separate maintenance as soon as you please! Yes, madam, or a divorce! I'll make an example of myself for the benefit of all old bachelors. Let us separate, madam.

LADY T. Agreed, agreed! And, now, my dear Sir Peter, we are of a mind once more, we may be the happiest couple, and never differ again, you know,—ha! ha! ha! Well, you are going to be in a passion, I see, and I shall only interrupt you; so, bye, bye. (*Exit.*)

SIR P. Plagues and tortures! Can't I make her angry, either? O, I am the most miserable fellow! but I'll not bear her presuming to keep her temper. (*Exit.*)

MOVE TO EASE LOT OF TRUCK DRIVER[1]

IF MODERN TRUCKS CONTINUE TO BE MORE LUXURIOUS

Frank Sullivan

FIRST TRUCK DRIVER. O-o-o-o-p! Oh, I'm *so* sorry.

SECOND TRUCK DRIVER. That's perfectly all right, old man.

F. T. D. But I should have stuck out my hand. It was all my fault.

S. T. D. Oh, bother, bother, bother, my dear man! Accidents will happen. None of us is perfect.

F. T. D. It's damned white of you to see it in that light. It really was unspeakably gauche of me.

S. T. D. Mais, vous êtes fou! I mean to say, if one worried about all the little gaucheries one committed during the course of a day, where would one be, what?

F. T. D. It's ripping of you to be so ripping about it, old foghorn.

S. T. D. Nice truck you have there.

F. T. D. It's one of the newer models, with accommodations as com-

[1] From The New York *World*, used by permission of the author.

fortable as any passenger car. The coloring is appealing, the driving effort has been reduced to a minimum ——

S. T. D. And the metal parts of the cab interior are chromium plated.

F. T. D. Don't you just love chromium plating? By the way, that truck you have is no slouch.

S. T. D. Slouch? Qu'est-ce que c'est "slouch"?

F. T. D. Oh, it's a slang word, or colloquialism, meaning rather rummy, or not quite up to snuff.

S. T. D. How too amusing! I shall have to remember that and tell it to the boys at the garage. Slutch.

F. T. D. No, not slutch. Slouch.

S. T. D. I'd better write it down. Have you a bit a paper?

F. T. D. Let me see. Oh, here. Use the back of my house charges bill from the Racquet Club. Do you mind awfully?

S. T. D. Not at all, my dear fellow. Nice club, the Racquet Club.

F. T. D. Oh, so-so. Nice hatbands. Could be a bit more choosy.

S. T. D. No club that really matters should have more than twelve members.

F. T. D. I'd say three. Still, I faynd the University Club a quiet spot.

S. T. D. Well, I'm still true to the old Union Club.

F. T. D. Ah, there goes Mrs. Astor's limousine. Isn't that she inside?

S. T. D. To be sure. Hello, hello, there, Mrs. Astor!

F. T. D. Charming woman, she.

S. T. D. Capital. Useful as well as ornamental. Well, the lights have changed. Shall I be seeing you one day, Mulligan?

F. T. D. Well, indeed. Why don't we ever get together?

S. T. D. Ah, New York! One never sees one in New York.

F. T. D. Shall you be at the truck meet in Aiken?

S. T. D. I think not. Aiken bores me.

F. T. D. Then do come have tea chez Mrs. Mulligan et moi one day.

S. T. D. Ripping. Where can you be got?

F. T. D. Same place. The Ritz.

S. T. D. I'll have my man ring you.

F. T. D. I'll have my man answer you. Well, the best of garbage to you.

S. T. D. Hasta la mañana, as the dear Infanta used to say.

F. T. D. Charming creature, the Infanta.

TWO ANCIENT LADIES OF ALEXANDRIA [1]

Theocritus

(Arranged for oral reading by the editor)

GORGO ..... } *The Ladies*
PRAXINOE ..... }
EUNOE ..... *Servant of Praxinoe*
LITTLE BOY ..... *Praxinoe's Son*
TWO MEN

SCENE: *Alexandria in Egypt*

GORGO (*At her friend's door*). Praxinoe within?
EUNOE. Why, Gorgo, dear,
How late you are! Yes, she's within.
PRAX. (*Appearing*). What, no!
And so you're come at last! A seat here, Eunoe;
And set a cushion.
EUNOE. There is one.
PRAX. Sit down.
GORGO. Oh, what a thing's a spirit! Do you know,
I've scarcely got alive to you, Praxinoe?
There's such a crowd—such heaps of carriages,
And horses, and fine soldiers, all full dressed;
And then you live such an immense way off!
PRAX. Why, 'twas *his* shabby doing. He would take
This hole that he calls house, at the world's end.
'Twas all to spite me, and to part us two.
GORGO (*Speaking lower*). Don't talk so of your husband, there's a dear,
Before the little one. See how he looks at you.
PRAX. (*To the little boy*). There, don't look grave, child; cheer up, Zopy, sweet;

[1] Idyll XV from *The Syracusan Gossips*, translated by Leigh Hunt. The ladies are attending the pageant of Adonis' half-yearly return to the bower of Venus, who loves him. His two-day return to life and Venus was annually commemorated by the heathen world. Arsinoë, the consort of Ptolemy Philadelphus, ruler of Alexandria, has put on the pageant for the public.

It isn't your papa we're talking of.

CORGO (*Aside*). He thinks it is, though.

PRAX. Oh no—nice papa!
(*To Gorgo.*) Well, this strange body, once (let us say, *once*,
And then he won't know who we're telling of),
Going to buy some washes and saltpeter,
Comes bringing salt! the great big simpleton!

CORGO. And there's my precious ninny, Dioclede:
He gave for five old ragged fleeces, yesterday,
Ten drachmas!—for mere dirt! trash upon trash!
But come; put on your things; button away,
Or we shall miss the show. It's the king's own;
And I am told the queen has made of it
A wonderful fine thing.

PRAX. Ay, luck has luck.
Well, tell us all about it; for we hear
Nothing in this vile place.

CORGO. We haven't time.
Workers can't throw away their holidays.

PRAX. Some water, Eunoe; and then, my fine one,
To take your rest again. Puss loves good lying.
Come; move, girl, move; some water—water first.
Look how she brings it! Now, then; hold, hold, careless;
Not quite so fast; you're wetting all my gown.
There; that'll do. Now, please the gods, I'm washed.
The key of the great chest—where's that? Go fetch it.

(*Exit* EUNOE.)

CORGO. Praxinoe, that gown with the full skirts
Becomes you mightily. What did it cost you?

PRAX. Oh, don't remind me of it. More than one
Or two good minas, besides time and trouble.

CORGO. All of which you had forgotten.

PRAX. Ah, ha! True!
That's good. You're quite right.

(*Re-enter* EUNOE.)

Come; my cloak, my cloak;
And parasol. There—help it on now, properly.

(*To the little boy.*) Child, child, you cannot go. The horse will bite it;
The Horrid Woman's coming. Well, well, simpleton,
Cry, if you will; but you must not get lamed.
Come, Gorgo.—Phrygia, take the child, and play with him;
And call the dog indoors, and lock the gate. (*They go out.*)

[PRAXINOE, GORGO, *and* EUNOE, *leading* EUTYCHIS *by the hand, are on the crowded street, seeking a place to view the spectacle.*]

PRAX. Powers, what a crowd! how shall we get along?
Why, they're like ants! countless! innumerable!
Well, Ptolemy, you've done fine things, that's certain,
Since the gods took your father. No one nowadays
Does harm to trav'lers as they used to do,
After the Egyptian fashion, lying in wait,—
Masters of nothing but detestable tricks;
And all alike,—a set of cheats and brawlers.
Gorgo, sweet friend, what will become of us?
Here are the king's horse-guards! Pray, my good man,
Don't tread upon us so. See the bay horse!
Look how it rears! It's like a great mad dog.
How you stand, Eunoe! It will throw him certainly.
How lucky that I left that child at home!

GORGO. Courage, Praxinoe; they have passed us now;
They've gone into the courtyard.

PRAX. Good! I breathe again,
I never could abide in all my life
A horse and a cold snake.

GORGO. See now, Praxinoe,
How the gate's crowded.

PRAX. Frightfully, indeed.
Give me your hand, dear Gorgo; and do you
Hold fast of Eutychis's, Eunoe.
Don't let her go; don't stir an inch; and so
We'll all squeeze in together. Stick close now.
Oh me! oh me! my veil's torn right in two!
Do take care, my good man, and mind my cloak.

MAN. 'Twas not my fault; but I'll take care.

PRAX. What heaps!

They drive like pigs!

MAN. Courage, old girl! all's safe.

PRAX. Blessing's upon you, sir, now and forever,
For taking care of us—a good, kind soul.
How Eunoe squeezes us! Do, child, make way
For your own self. There; now, we've all got in,
As the man said, when he was put in prison.

GORGO. Praxinoe, do look there! What lovely tapestry!
How fine and showy! One would think the gods did it.

PRAX. Holy Minerva! how those artists work!
How they do paint their pictures to the life!
The figures stand so like, and move so like!
They're quite alive! not worked!—Well, certainly,
Man's a wise creature. See now—only look—
See—lying on the silver couch, all budding,
With the young down about his face! Adonis!
Charming Adonis—charming ev'n in Acheron!

SECOND MAN. Do hold your tongues there; chatter, chatter, chatter,
The turtles stun one with their yawning gabble.

GORGO. Hey-day! Whence comes this man? What is't to you,
If we do chatter? Speak where you've a right.
You're not the master here. And as for that,
Our people are from Corinth, like Bellerophon.
Our tongue's Peloponnesiac; and we hope
It's lawful for the Dorians to speak Doric!

PRAX. We've but one master, by the Honey-sweet! [1]
And don't fear you, nor all your empty blows.

GORGO. Hush, hush, Praxinoe!—there's that Grecian girl,
A most amazing creature, going to sing
About Adonis; she that sings so well
The song of Sperchis: she'll sing something fine,
I warrant.—See how sweetly she prepares!

The Public Singer's Song

Venus, ever amiable,
Lo, the long-expected Hours,

[1] Refers to Proserpine.

Slowest of the blessed powers,
Yet who bring us something ever,
Ceasing their soft dancing never,
Bring thee back thy beauteous one
From perennial Acheron.
He has all the fruits that now
Hang upon the timely bough:
He has green young garden plots,
Basketed in silver pots;
Syrian scents in alabaster,
And whate'er a curious taster
Could desire, that women make
With oil or honey, of meal cake;
And a bower to shade his state
Heaped with dill, an amber weight;
And about him Cupids flying,
Like young nightingales, that—trying
Their new wings—go half afraid,
Here and there, within the shade.
But another couch there is
For Adonis, close to his;
Venus has it, and with joy
Clasps again her blooming boy
With a kiss that feels no fret,
For his lips are downy yet.
Happy with her love be she;
But to-morrow morn will we,
With our locks and garments flowing
And our bosoms gently showing,
Come and take him in a throng,
To the sea-shore, with this song:—
Go, beloved Adonis, go
Year by year thus to and fro;
Only privileged demigod;
Bless us then, Adonis dear,
And bring us joy another year;
Dearly hast thou come again,
And dearly shalt be welcomed then.

CORGO. Well, if that's not a clever creature, trust me!
Lord! what a quantity of things she knows!
And what a charming voice!—'Tis time to go, though,
For there's my husband hasn't had his dinner,
And you'd best come across him when he wants it!
Good-by, Adonis, darling. Come again.

5. *One-act Plays*

A MATTER OF CHOICE [1]

William J. Farma

CHARACTERS

MRS. BRENT.
JOHN BRENT (*her husband*).
PHŒBE BRENT
MARCIA BRENT
JEANETTE BRENT
HENRY BRENT
} (*their children*).
AUNT MARGARET (*John's sister*).

(*The curtain rises on the living-room in the home of* JOHN BRENT, *the head of one of the best families of Grant City. It is a June afternoon and the sun is entering through a French door at the actor's* R. *In the* L. *wall is another door opening into other rooms of the house. Slightly to the* R. *of* C. *stage is a davenport which stands facing the French door. A table stands at the back of the davenport and on it lies a large sample-book of wall-paper.* PHŒBE BRENT *is discovered seated at the upper end of this table, and* MRS. BRENT, *her mother, is seen some distance to her* L. *and down stage, busy with sewing.*)

(PHŒBE, *who is but fourteen years old, is evidently trying to make a decision between two samples of wall-paper, for she is turning*

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the pages back and forth from one to the other, considering each with solemn deliberation. Finally she sits up significantly and holds the most favored selection off for final inspection.)

PHŒBE. I think I should like this. (*After a thoughtful pause.*) Purple tulips on an orange background.

MRS. BRENT (*Not looking up*). Yes, wouldn't it be lovely? You have such mild tastes, dear.

PHŒBE. The colors blend.

MRS. BRENT. Yes?

PHŒBE (*After some deliberation*). Well, I think I have decided. It will look nice in the morning sun.

MRS. BRENT (*Still not looking up*). Not the purple tulip paper, I hope?

PHŒBE. Yes, Mother.

MRS. BRENT (*Turning*). Now, Phœbe, please. Don't meddle. I want to order the paper this afternoon if I possibly can. Something plain, something that will serve as a background for your ivory furniture.

PHŒBE. No, no. I mean it this time, Mother. This is my decision. Won't you look at it? (*She takes the sample over to her mother.*)

MRS. BRENT. Purple and orange? I can't imagine. (*Seeing the sample.*) Oh! Surely you're not serious, Phœbe. It's atrocious!

PHŒBE. You really feel that way about it? And I think it's lovely. It will make such a pleasant room. When the sun comes in in the morning, it will look just like a garden. Please, Mother, may I have it? Don't go back on your promise now.

MRS. BRENT. But when I said you might choose your own paper, Phœbe, I didn't think for a moment that you would have such absurd ideas. I hoped that you would choose a plain, unpretentious design, something that would serve as a background, and I suggested that the predominant color be blue so that we could call it the blue room. Blue is a charming color and your ivory furniture would look nice with it. I think you might be a little more considerate of other people's ideas, Phœbe.

PHŒBE. But, Mother, you said I could have my choice, didn't you? You said you wanted me to be satisfied.

MRS. BRENT. Of course I did. I want you to have your choice. But it

seems to me, Phœbe, that after three hours of meditating over these samples that you might come to a better decision than that!

PHŒBE (*Moving back to the table*). I never saw these samples before until just this minute; this must be a new book.

MRS. BRENT. No, it's the same book. You're in the dining-room paper section, that's all. This would be just the sort of paper that an ice-cream parlor proprietor would choose. (MR. JOHN BRENT *is heard off stage.*) I think that's your father; we'll see what he thinks of it. (MR. BRENT *enters at* L. C. *carrying a newspaper and stands for a moment at the door.*) Oh, John, will you look at Phœbe's choice of wall-paper for her bedroom?

JOHN BRENT. Wall-paper? Oh, yes. Phœbe's wall-paper. (*Moving to the table.*)

MRS. BRENT. Isn't it dainty?

JOHN BRENT (*Without sarcasm*). Yeh—yes, it's pretty. Kind of summery and bright, isn't it? (*Surveying it from a distance.*) Odd color for a tulip, but you can never tell what these Luther Burbanks will do. Well, isn't it fine that it's all settled?

MRS. BRENT. You certainly don't approve of it?

JOHN BRENT. What? Sure it's all right, isn't it? Bright and pleasant. Just the sort of paper for our little Phœbe bird, eh? (*Patting* PHŒBE.)

PHŒBE. Oh, you're a dear, Dad. If nobody else likes it I know I can count on you and Aunt Margaret to like it. Aunt Margaret says I have very good taste; she says I always have such nice color combinations.

MRS. BRENT. I think Aunt Margaret meant that in sarcasm, Phœbe.

JOHN BRENT. By the way, where is Margaret?

MRS. BRENT. Out playing golf with Henry and the girls. I'm expecting them any minute now. (*Glancing out the French doors.*) They've been out since one o'clock. Your sister is charming, John. I really haven't had a chance to have a good talk with her since she has been here. They are always dragging her off somewhere. Marcia has forgotten all about Oakmere since Margaret has been here.

JOHN BRENT. Oakmere?

MRS. BRENT. The summer camp she was so set on going to.

JOHN BRENT. I hope she keeps on forgetting. It would be an expensive proposition. (*Looking out the French doors.*) Well, here they

come. Henry and Jennie arguing as usual. Now you'll hear some opinions on wall-paper. (*He moves up* L. *to an easy-chair. Here he sits with his back partly to the audience for the greater portion of the play, absorbed in his newspaper.*)

(*Enter* JENNIE *and* HENRY. JENNIE *has spent some time at a girls' college and she finds Grant City at times quite depressing.* HENRY *is eighteen. With his advancing years he has taken on considerable manly dignity. The two sail in together and head for the table where they look for the afternoon mail.*)

JENNIE (*Perfunctorily as she enters*). Hello, everybody. (*The response is lost in the ensuing argument. At* L. *of table.*) I don't like to insinuate, but I'm sure I saw you make two tries at that ball in the long grass. In fact, I know you did.

HENRY. I can see you don't like to insinuate, Jennie, dear. (*On his way to a chair up* R., *above French door, with his mail and some very light literature.*)

MRS. BRENT. My, how affectionate we are.

JENNIE. Your son's golf ethics aren't as good as they might be.

HENRY (*Up* R. C.). Now, listen here, Jennie, I wish you wouldn't take so much for granted.

JENNIE. For granted! (*Meeting him up* R. *on her way to davenport.*) I know perfectly well you could never get that ball out of there with one shot. It isn't in you.

HENRY. Well, I did, and that's all there's to it. Ask Aunt Margaret, she saw it. Ask her.

JENNIE. Aunt Margaret's too polite to say anything. And anyway, I saw for myself.

HENRY. You didn't. I know you weren't looking.

JENNIE. Oh! I suppose you took particular care that I wasn't looking.

HENRY. Now listen here, Jennie, if you think you can ——

JOHN BRENT. All right, all right. Let's forget it. Here's Aunt Margaret. (HENRY *marches over to his chair up* R. *and* JENNIE *sits in the davenport. Enter* MARGARET *and* MARCIA. MARGARET *is fat, forty, and good-natured. She is quite vivacious;* MARCIA *is sixteen. They walk in arm in arm and stand together while* JOHN BRENT *speaks. When they separate* MARGARET *sits in an easy-chair down* R. *and* MARCIA *sits at the* R. *end of the davenport. Here she sits for some time gazing pensively out the French doors, evidently pre-*

occupied with far more important things than small family chatter.) Hello, Maggie. What's the gross reduction for the afternoon?

AUNT MARGARET (*Moving to the chair*). I haven't weighed, John, but I'm sure I gained. I feel a hundred pounds heavier than when I started out this noon. (*Sitting.*) It's most discouraging to exercise. I think dieting is far more effective. You know it's amazing how light one begins to feel after eating only one meal a day. (*Seeing the wall-paper samples.*) Oh, you're selecting wall-paper. That's pretty. (PHŒBE *giggles audibly.*)

MRS. BRENT. Phœbe!

AUNT MARGARET. What's the matter? Isn't it? (*Laughs.*) You know I haven't any taste when it comes to interior decorating. I always give the decorators a free hand.

MRS. BRENT. Phœbe is choosing some paper for her room—we are doing it over this spring, you know,—she seems to favor this at present.

AUNT MARGARET. Oh, then it must be pretty. And the whole choice lies with Phœbe?

MRS. BRENT. Yes, it's her room, you know.

AUNT MARGARET. What a responsibility, Phœbe!

MRS. BRENT (*Effusively*). That is just what I want to develop in the children, Margaret, a sense of responsibility. I have rather modern ideas about bringing up children, you know. Life is so often a matter of choice that I believe one can't begin too early to get practice in making decisions.

AUNT MARGARET. Yes, that's true. That's very true. And you ——?

MRS. BRENT (*In full pace*). I seldom interfere in my children's affairs. I let them use their own judgment as much as possible. Of course, I make suggestions and I advise, but I try not to go any further than that. The final decision usually rests with them. The children make rather odd decisions at times (*Looking at* PHŒBE'S *selection*), rather *absurd* decisions at times, but I think we profit best by our own experiences. What do you think of the idea, Margaret?

AUNT MARGARET. I think it's splendid. And it shows such a fine attitude on your part, Isabel. (*Turning to the children.*) I wonder if you children realize how fortunate you are to have such a broad-minded mother. (*Smiling.*) I hope you always ask your mother's

advice before making any important decisions? It would hardly be fair if you didn't confide with your mother about everything—and with the proud father, of course.

JOHN BRENT (*From his armchair slightly turned from the audience*). Mighty little confiding they do with me—only when they need some money.

AUNT MARGARET. They go to their mother. In the home the mother reigns supreme, as it should be. But really, John, I had no idea what an up-to-date wife you had. Isabel's theory is quite remarkable.

MRS. BRENT (*Very much pleased*). Oh, now, Margaret, please ——

AUNT MARGARET. Yes, it's true. Do you know one of the biggest defects in education to-day is the deplorable lack of opportunity for intuitive thought, which is exactly what you are trying to give your children?

MRS. BRENT (*In complete agreement*). Intuitive thought! Intuitive thought! How important it is!

AUNT MARGARET. The subconscious reasoning.

MRS. BRENT. Subconscious reasoning! I must remember that. Did you hear it, John? Subconscious reasoning.

JOHN BRENT. Yes, I heard it. I'll probably hear a whole lot of it, too.

MRS. BRENT. Perhaps you will. You should. You know, John is a little skeptical of my system. He says the whole idea is unsound and won't have anything to do with it. But he's been very nice about it—haven't you, dear? He hasn't interfered once since I started the system. I think I can say it has been quite successful, and I've had it almost a year.

JOHN BRENT. You have it like you have the measles or mumps—only this is more contagious. The lady across the street has got it now.

MRS. BRENT. Oh, John.

AUNT MARGARET. And so Phœbe has an important decision to make.

PHŒBE. Yes, Aunt Margaret, and I think I like this—purple tulips on an orange background.

JENNIE (*Who has been kneeling in the davenport and looking over the back*). Oh, Phœbe!

PHŒBE. Don't you like it?

JENNIE. It's terrible. It would kill everything else in the room. Wall-

paper should never be aggressive—it should be restful. Whatever made you select that, Phœbe?

PHŒBE. I like it; it's cheerful.

JENNIE. Oh, but it isn't. It is heavy and intense. It would tend to exert an unwholesome influence. Colors, you know, arouse a mental state, so we must put on our walls a shade which is favorable to the occupant's state of mind—something that will result in an occult balance. Now, Phœbe is ——

HENRY. We will now have a lecture on the art of interior decoration by the distinguished authority, Professor Jeanette Van Putten Brent.

JENNIE. Well, if I ——

HENRY. B! A!

JENNIE. Well, if I have had a course in interior decoration, I don't see why I shouldn't make use of it. I think Phœbe has gone astray and she should be helped. In the first place wall-paper should serve as a background and this doesn't.

MRS. BRENT (*Rising and going to table*). See, Phœbe. Now I think this blue with the mottled effect will make an ideal background for Phœbe's bedroom suite. Here, isn't it lovely?

JENNIE. Oh, no, Mother.

MRS. BRENT. What's the matter?

JENNIE. It wouldn't do for Phœbe.

MRS. BRENT. Well, why not, Jennie? (*Returning to her chair.*)

JENNIE (*Rising*). Blue is not a suitable color for a young girl's bedroom—it is too cold, it lacks cheer and light. A child (*with a wide gesture toward* PHŒBE) should not be surrounded by cold, depressing colors. Phœbe's colors should be tints of red and yellow. Now let me see —— (*Her argument with her mother has led her around the end of the davenport and now she stands at the* L. *of the table looking over the samples.*) Some shade of tan is what we want—a buff would be excellent. Here! Oh, this is perfect. It's just what you want, Phœbe. A buff with an ivory French stripe. It's ideal! (PHŒBE *gives the paper a momentary glance.*) Don't you like it?

PHŒBE. No, not very well.

JENNIE. Why, you hardly looked at it!

PHŒBE. I did. I've gone over the paper in this book several times.

JENNIE. Well, I'm sure we should appreciate your particular attention on this paper, Miss Brent. I am sure it is worthy of your time.

PHŒBE. I have seen it, thank you.

JENNIE. Mother, look at her. She won't even examine it.

MRS. BRENT. Well, Jennie, for that matter, I think you might have given a little more consideration to my suggestion. I don't think it's a cold paper at all. It's too light a blue for that.

JENNIE. Oh, but, Mother, it is. A square yard of it here doesn't seem so bad, but a whole room of it would be very depressing.

MRS. BRENT. I can't agree with you, Jennie. I don't get your point of view at all. (*A pause.*)

JOHN BRENT. What is it, a dead-lock? Come on, Aunt Maggie, what paper do you like? Maybe you can help them out.

MRS. BRENT. Yes, do, Margaret. Perhaps you have a good suggestion.

PHŒBE. You said my purple tulip paper was pretty, didn't you, Aunt Margaret?

JENNIE. Oh, Phœbe, don't take advantage of a momentary slip like that.

PHŒBE. How do you know it was a slip? She didn't say so, did she?

MRS. BRENT. Well, I'm quite sure Aunt Margaret would never take your choice seriously, Phœbe. Now, Margaret, which paper do you think would be best, everything considered?

AUNT MARGARET. Everything considered?—Why—I think I should prefer to remain neutral, Isabel. I think it would be safer to stay on the side-lines.

HENRY (*Looking up from a magazine*). You're pretty wise, Aunt Margaret. Don't let 'em get you into it. Don't commit yourself. When this family begins to argue about what's art and what's good taste, it's safest to stay out of the argument entirely. You don't hear me saying anything, do you? Well, I know by experience. (*Drawing up his chair beside his aunt's.*) We'll just sit here and be spectators. (*Assuming a spectator's attitude.*) Looks like a long-drawn-out affair, don't it? Wish we had some peanuts.

MRS. BRENT. Oh, Henry, anybody would think we do nothing but argue here.

JENNIE. Well, I think we could come to a decision much sooner if Phœbe would be more considerate. What's wrong with my paper, Phœbe? Will you please explain your attitude?

PHŒBE. I don't like tan.

JENNIE. Well, why don't you like it, Phœbe? What's the matter with it?

PHŒBE. I don't like it—because I don't like it. I can't explain why, I guess it's my temperament or—my—my unconscious mind or something.

JENNIE. Oh! What talk. Your unconscious mind! Are you sure it isn't your suppressed soul asserting itself?

PHŒBE. I don't care to listen to your talk. You might just as well be quiet.

JENNIE. Oh, I know one can't argue with you, Phœbe. You're stubborn, that's all it is. You just want to be different from everybody else. If you didn't read so many of those morbid books you might not have such absurd ideas. Mother, Phœbe reads the most impossible books. I think it's shameful. Helen Johnson gets them from her father's library, and Phœbe reads them.

MRS. BRENT. I don't know what you are talking about. What do you mean by impossible books?

JENNIE. I can't say them before everybody, but I think you ought to know what some of them are. (*Rising.*) I think you either ought to make Phœbe stop going to Johnsons' or make Mr. Johnson lock up his questionable books. (JENNIE *and* MRS. BRENT *meet at down* L. C. JENNIE *whispers one book, pauses, whispers another, pauses, and still another;* MRS. BRENT *registering more and more dismay with each pause.*)

MRS. BRENT. Oh, no! Why—Phœbe!

JOHN BRENT (*Rising*). Oh, it's not so bad as all that, is it?

MRS. BRENT (*Weakly*). *Come here, John.*

(JENNIE *has walked haughtily back to the davenport.* MR. BRENT *comes down to* MRS. BRENT. *She repeats the list into* JOHN BRENT'S *ear.*)

JOHN BRENT. No! Phœbe? Well, I'll be ——! (*He and* MRS. BRENT *stand looking at* PHŒBE, *in a bewildered manner. Then* MR. BRENT *returns to his chair, gives* PHŒBE *one more bewildered glance, and sits down.*)

MARCIA (*Contemptuously*). Why, Jennie, what a mean, dirty thing to do!

JENNIE. Oh, be still.

MARCIA. I won't. There was no call for such a thing. If I was Phœbe, I'd ——

JENNIE. Will you please be quiet? You don't understand this situation at all. It's none of your affair.

MARCIA. Oh, it isn't! Well, it wasn't yours either. People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones!

JENNIE. I don't know what you are talking about.

MARCIA. Well, you ought to. And if I were you I would be careful what I said about other people. (*Rising and coming round front of davenport.*)

JENNIE. You don't know anything about me!

MRS. BRENT. Marcia! What are you talking about? What do you know about Jennie?

MARCIA (*Startled at the realization that her mother has heard everything*). Oh, I—I ——

MRS. BRENT (*Coming toward* MARCIA). I want you to tell me. You haven't any right to make such insinuations, Marcia. If what you meant is true, I want to know it. Do you hear me?

MARCIA. Well, I don't care, Jennie—*smokes!*

MRS. BRENT. Marcia Brent! What are you saying!

MARCIA. It's true. I've seen her, and more than once, too. She smokes cigarettes, and I know where she keeps them.

MRS. BRENT. Oh, I can't believe it. One of my daughters a smoker! Haven't you anything to say, Jeanette?

(MARCIA *has gone up stage by way of the table and* PHŒBE *to get out of the center of strife.* JENNIE *rises and comes to the end of the davenport.*)

JENNIE. Mother, don't make so much of it. The best people smoke nowadays.

MRS. BRENT. So it's true! Oh, Jennie, I can't believe it. Where do you do it? Certainly not in your room? And you even try to justify such conduct?

JENNIE. Well, why shouldn't I justify it? Some of the nicest girls I knew in college smoked. And all the best people in England smoke.

MRS. BRENT. I don't care if they do. This isn't England and this isn't your college. The best people in Grant City don't smoke. And you are living in Grant City now.

JENNIE. I know a lot of nice people in Grant City who smoke, too.

You aren't acquainted with the situation, Mother. Really you aren't. Why, even Aunt Margaret ——! (*She covers her mouth. An uncomfortable pause.*)

AUNT MARGARET (*Looking very awkward in her position there beside* HENRY). I think you had better finish your sentence, Jeanette.

JENNIE. Oh, I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to. It came out before I thought.

JOHN BRENT. I don't think Margaret is concealing anything from us. She is old enough to know what is best for herself. We needn't drag her into this.

AUNT MARGARET. I think I had better explain, John. I did tell Jeanette that I smoke occasionally—for—medicinal purposes. It's good for reducing. But really, Jeanette, I ——

JENNIE. Oh, Aunt Margaret, please don't be angry with me. I was so anxious to show Mother that smoking is being done nowadays that my tongue just ran away with me.

AUNT MARGARET. Of course I'm not angry, Jeanette.

JOHN BRENT. I don't want to hear any more such arguments for smoking, Jeanette. Aunt Margaret doesn't live in Grant City and neither do any of your college friends. If you have got the habit, you can start right in breaking it to-day. You understand!

JENNIE. Yes, Father.

HENRY. And please carry on your battle outside of the bleachers!

JENNIE (*Ignoring* HENRY *and returning to the davenport where she stands for a moment facing* MARCIA *who is seated*). Well, I hope you're satisfied!

MARCIA. It's good for you. You started it.

JENNIE. Well, I suppose you think you don't live in a glass house!

MARCIA. You can't say a thing about me, Jennie Brent!

JENNIE. Oh, can't I? You might be surprised.

MARCIA. You don't know a thing. And if you do—it isn't so!

JENNIE. You'd better be pretty careful what you say to me, Marcia Brent! (JENNIE *speaking.*) You'd better not make me lose my temper!

MARCIA (*Rising*). I'll say what I damn please! I don't have to cater to your temper! And I don't have to hide myself in the attic like a deceitful child if I want to smoke! So there!

JENNIE (*Fiercely*). Oh! You little devil! How dare you talk to me

like that! So I don't know anything about you, don't I? Well, what about that party at Woodford's Hall—and what about Carl Briggs!

MARCIA (*Sinking to the davenport*). What? You—you know ——

HENRY (*From his position in the bleachers*). Say, Jennie, what's the idea?

(MRS. BRENT *rises dramatically in her chair for further developments.*)

PHŒBE. Oh, I think this is terrible! (*She lays her head on the table and begins to weep. A long, awkward pause.*)

JENNIE (*Weakening*). Well, I know it's a mean thing to do. I don't like to be so disagreeable, but—oh dear, I'm so miserable.

MRS. BRENT. Jeanette Brent! I want you to tell me what happened at Woodford's Hall.

JENNIE. No! No! I don't want to, Mother. Everybody hates me now, even Aunt Margaret, I know. Please don't ask me. Oh, I'm so miserable.

MRS. BRENT. Do you think I can be satisfied with this scrap of information? Do you think I can go on without knowing exactly what happened there—Woodford's Hall, of all places! I want to know everything! From now on, I am going to see that I do know everything.

JENNIE. Then let Marcia tell you.

MRS. BRENT. No, I first want to hear what you know. You started this, Jeanette, and I want you to finish it. (JENNIE *looks uncomfortable.*) Do you hear me, Jeanette? I am waiting.

JENNIE (*Coming down to the end of the davenport*). Marcia has been going with Carl Briggs.

MRS. BRENT. I don't know any such person.

JENNIE. Well, he lives in that little house right behind us over the wall. He lives there with his mother and his sister, Mable. She works in the match factory.

MRS. BRENT. In the office?

JENNIE. No, she runs a machine.

MRS. BRENT. Where is the father?

JENNIE. He's in jail for bootlegging.

MRS. BRENT. For bootlegging! Oh dear, no! Marcia!

MARCIA. But he's an awfully nice boy, Mother. He can't help his family, can he?

MRS. BRENT. I shall talk to you later, young lady. Jeanette, what has this to do with Woodford's Hall?

JENNIE. Oh, Mother, I ——

MRS. BRENT. Go on. I want to know!

JENNIE. Well, Carl took Marcia to a dance at Woodford's Hall.

MRS. BRENT. Oh! To Woodford's Hall! Oh, no, no! What a disgrace! Oh dear, I've been a blind fool. (*After a pause.*) Jeanette! How do you know this? How did *you* learn all this?

JENNIE. Frank Kerwin told me.

MRS. BRENT. Frank Kerwin! How should he know?

JENNIE. Frank Kerwin is a prohibition agent, and he directed a raiding party against Woodford's Hall the night Marcia was there with Carl, and ——

MRS. BRENT (*Tensely*). Yes, go on.

JENNIE. And Carl was arrested for having bootleg liquor with him.

MRS. BRENT. Good Heavens! And what became of Marcia?

JENNIE. Oh, I don't know—I—I don't know, Mother.

MRS. BRENT. You are keeping something from me! Do you hear, you are keeping something from me! Didn't Frank Kerwin know what happened to Marcia? (*A pause.*) Answer me!

JENNIE (*Breaking out*). I won't say another word. Do you hear? I won't say another word! You haven't any right to pick on me this way. It's not fair. Why should I have to tell on everybody here and be made out an ungrateful and deceitful person, when all I have done is smoke cigarettes! And why shouldn't I smoke! First you let me get the habit, and then you tell me I have to stop right away. I tell you I can't stop—and I won't stop! Oh dear! (*She runs up stage in front of the davenport and leans dramatically against the French door casement.* AUNT MARGARET, *wishing to leave the family to its personal affairs, rises, crosses up* L., *is met by* MR. BRENT *at his table and is persuaded to sit down in the window-seat. All in pantomime.*)

MRS. BRENT (*She totters to her armchair and drops into it. A pause*). Marcia, come here.

MARCIA (*Coming to her mother*). But, Mother, he's an awfully nice boy, he is, I tell you.

MRS. BRENT. Do you think that justifies going out with him and to such a resort! Oh, I can't believe it—I can't believe it! My daughter in a raided place. What will people say? And here I was just telling Margaret how successful my system was. Freedom of choice! Bah!—Marcia, I want you to tell me what happened after this Briggs person was arrested. Did they take you to the police station, too? Oh dear!

MARCIA. Oh, no, Mother. Of course not.

MRS. BRENT. Well, how did you get home? You didn't come home alone.

MARCIA. I—I—came home with—Henry.

MRS. BRENT. With Henry!! With Henry Brent!! What was *he* doing there?

MARCIA. Oh, Mother! Why do you want to cross-question us this way? We're all here safe and sound, aren't we?

MRS. BRENT. What was Henry Brent doing at Woodford's Hall?

MARCIA. Well, I found out through Carl that Henry was taking Carl's sister Mable to the dance at Woodford's in our car, so I made him take me and Carl with them!

MRS. BRENT. Henry!—Oh, no, no! My son encouraging his own sister to keep such company and frequent such places!

HENRY. But, Mother, the Briggses aren't a bad lot—and it was sort of a lark anyway.

MRS. BRENT. You permit your sister to be seen and classed with such people as go to Woodford's Hall! How are we to know what Frank Kerwin will say? How are we to know what he *has* said! It's probably all over town by now! Marcia, how long have you been going with this Briggs person?

MARCIA. I've known Carl for over six months. I met him when he came over the wall for a baseball that he'd knocked over into our yard. He's an awfully nice boy, Mother!

MRS. BRENT. Do you think a boy who carries bootleg liquor around with him is nice? And whose father is in jail! And whose sister goes to Woodford's Hall! I don't want you to see that Briggs boy again. Do you understand?

MARCIA. Oh, Mother!

MRS. BRENT. I mean it.

MARCIA. But I have to see him. I have to see him to-night.

MRS. BRENT. Why do you have to see him?

MARCIA. Because I—I promised him I would.

MRS. BRENT. Well, I shall send a note over to the Briggs residence cancelling all further engagements with the Brent family. And that will settle the matter.

MARCIA. No, it won't. It doesn't settle it, I tell you! I won't let you do that.

MRS. BRENT. You won't let me do —— Are you telling me what I shall and what I sha'n't do!

MARCIA. If you send that letter to Briggs' house, I'll see Carl to-night and deny every word of it.

MRS. BRENT. You are not going to leave this house to-night!

MARCIA. I will. I promised Carl I would meet him in the park, and I'm going to meet him. You haven't any right to keep me in now. You haven't, Mother. For almost a year I've gone out whenever I pleased and with whomever I pleased. I have been seeing Carl in the Park every night for two months, and—he's really an awfully nice boy, Mother, he is.

MRS. BRENT. Marcia, I don't understand. You—you have been seeing this boy every night for—two months—and in a public park? Marcia, what does this boy mean to you? Has—has he ever kissed you?

MARCIA. Why, Mother!

MRS. BRENT. Has he?

MARCIA. Why, of course; we are—engaged.

MRS. BRENT. Oh, no, no, no! I won't have it, do you hear! You sha'n't see him again! I'll lock you up first. I'll—I'll take your clothes away from you!

JOHN BRENT. Now, now, Isabel. Take it easy, take it easy.

MRS. BRENT. Did you hear what she said, John! She said she was engaged! Oh dear! What are we going to do?

JOHN BRENT. You won't be able to do much in that state of mind, Isabel. Let me talk to her. (*He meets* MARCIA *at the end of the davenport and puts his arm on her shoulder.*) So our little girl has grown up on us, eh? Don't you think you are pretty young to be having affairs?

MARCIA. I'll be seventeen next month, and everybody says I'm old for my age.

JOHN BRENT. Well, when you see Carl to-night, I want you to tell him that you are leaving for Oakmere summer camp to-morrow.

MARCIA. To Oakmere, Father?

JOHN BRENT. Yes. And when you see your young friend, I want you to tell him that he won't see you for three months, because you're going to stay at Oakmere all summer. You and Aunt Margaret can go shopping to-morrow morning and get all the clothes you need. (*He connects with* AUNT MARGARET, *who agrees. She comes down* R. *and sits in davenport.*) Is that satisfactory?

MARCIA (*A little wary*). You're going to send me away for the whole summer. I can't see—anybody in Grant City until fall?

JOHN BRENT. Well, you don't suppose if we send you away to Oakmere we can afford to have you dropping in on us for week-ends and for Fourth of July, do you? I thought I heard you tell Mother you would like to go to Oakmere?

MARCIA. Oh, I'd love it, Father. But it's awfully expensive, and—for three months. And I'll need a lot of new things.

JOHN BRENT. I guess we can stand it. How about it, Mother, is it O. K.?

MRS. BRENT. Yes, John, anything you say. You know what's best.

JOHN BRENT. Well, it's settled then. Marcia, get your affairs in shape for leaving to-morrow. (*Turning upon* HENRY.) But I'm not settled with you, young man. I'll see you right after dinner in the library. (*He returns to his armchair and resumes reading his paper.*)

(*But the other members of this little family group are not so unconcerned as the father appeared to be. They are all conscious of* MRS. BRENT, *and they find the uncertainty as to just what is coming next quite uncomfortable. A pause—then.*)

MRS. BRENT. Oh dear! What a revelation! What a disappointment! My wonderful plan—a complete failure. And I thought I was doing so well by them. I thought I was being such a good mother.

JENNIE. Why, you are, Mother.

MRS. BRENT (*With a short ironical laugh*). Yes! (*A pause.*) Phœbe.

PHŒBE. Yes, Mother.

MRS. BRENT. Will you decide on your wall-paper?

PHŒBE. You—you want me to make my own choice?

MRS. BRENT. Yes, I promised to-day that you might choose whatever paper you like and I will keep my promise.

PHŒBE. But I thought ——

MRS. BRENT (*Firmly*). I think you had better choose the paper you like, Phœbe!

PHŒBE (*Meekly*). Yes, Mother.

MRS. BRENT (*Continues fiercely*). For I am afraid that this is to be the last application in this house of the system I called "Freedom of Choice"! I want you all to understand that very clearly. Is it perfectly clear? (*No answer.*) I want you to answer me, is it perfectly clear?

PHŒBE, MARCIA and JENNIE (*Meekly*). Yes, Mother.

MRS. BRENT (*Looking toward* HENRY). Henry, did you understand what I said?

HENRY. Yes, Mother.

MRS. BRENT. Now, Phœbe.

PHŒBE. I think—I think I should like this, purple tulips on an orange background.

CURTAIN

PLAYGOERS [1]

Arthur Wing Pinero

A DOMESTIC EPISODE

The characters are THE MASTER *and* MISTRESS *of an upper-class English household and their six servants; namely,* THE COOK, THE KITCHENMAID, THE PARLOURMAID, THE HOUSEMAID, THE USEFUL MAID, *and* THE ODD MAN.

The scene is the morning-room in a house in London, prettily decorated and furnished. Facing the spectator there is a broad window, through which the sunlight enters from a street, and in the right-hand wall a double-door enters into the room from the hall.

On the right there is a settee; at the further end of the settee is a small table with books and newspapers upon it; and on the left of the table there is an armchair. On the left of the room there is a breakfast-table upon which are the remains of a breakfast laid for two persons. There is a chair at the further side of this table, another on its left; and at the nearer side, some little distance, is a fauteuil-stool.

(*Note: Throughout, "right" and "left" are the spectator's right and left, not the actor's.*)

(THE MASTER *and* THE MISTRESS, *a good-looking young couple, are seated at the breakfast-table. He is reading a newspaper; she is sipping her tea and softly trilling a song.*)

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THE MASTER (*At the further side of the table, lowering his paper*). Very merry this morning, Pussy.

THE MISTRESS (*On the left of the table*). I always am, dearest, on Stock Exchange holidays, when you are mine for a whole day.

THE MASTER (*Indulgently*). Kiss me.

THE MISTRESS (*Rising and putting her lips to his brow*). Besides, I've a reason for feeling happy just now *every* day.

THE MASTER. Reason ——?

THE MISTRESS. The servants. Have you noticed them?

THE MASTER. I've noticed they're a new lot. (*Scowling*) Rotters!

THE MISTRESS. A brand-new lot. And please don't call them rotters. (*Moving to the right*) Darling, I am convinced that at last our miseries are ended and that we are in for a run of luck.

THE MASTER (*Lighting a cigarette*). Good business, if that's the case!

THE MISTRESS. At the present moment, Ernest dear, we have a staff of domestics which, in my opinion, is as near perfection as is humanly possible.

THE MASTER (*Without enthusiasm*). Hurrah!

THE MISTRESS (*Sinking into the arm-chair on the left of the small table*). But, oh, my gracious!

THE MASTER. Yes, it has been the devil of a time.

THE MISTRESS. I couldn't have gone on much longer as we have been going on. (*Clenching her hands*) Oh, the torture of the past eight months—the first eight months of our married life—when everything should have been rosy and ideal!

THE MASTER (*Rising and approaching her*). My poor dear Norma.

THE MISTRESS (*Animatedly*). Ring the bell, old boy.

THE MASTER (*Going to the fire-place*). Right'o.

THE MISTRESS. What do you think I am going to do?

THE MASTER (*Ringing the bell*). Ask me an easier one.

THE MISTRESS. I worked it out in my brain last night. I am going to give them a treat.

THE MASTER. Give *who* a treat?

THE MISTRESS. The servants, of course.

THE MASTER. Oh, tosh! When did this new gang come in?

THE MISTRESS. How unobservant you are! A week ago.

THE MASTER. Hadn't you better wait a bit?

THE MISTRESS (*Jumping up*). No. I intend to act on a different system

with this gang, as you term it, and to begin early. (*Joining him in the middle of the room*) I mean to show all these cheerful, willing people that we are their friends as well as their employers, and that we consider it our duty to provide them with food for their minds as well as for their—you know, dear.

THE MASTER (*Nodding*). U'm.

THE MISTRESS (*Slipping her arm through his*). Ernest, perhaps we have been a little remiss in this respect up to now ——

THE MASTER (*Withdrawing his arm*). H'sh!

(*The* PARLOURMAID *enters, carrying a tray. She is a great deal more ladylike than any lady who has ever breathed.*)

THE MISTRESS (*Sweetly*). Thank you, I didn't ring for you to clear, Beechcroft. I wish to see the servants.

THE PARLOURMAID (*Elevating her eyebrows*). See the servants?

THE MISTRESS. All of you, here.

THE PARLOURMAID (*With a shade of hauteur*). Reahly? Nothing wrong, I trust?

THE MISTRESS (*Smiling*). Nothing; quite the contrary.

THE PARLOURMAID. I'll bring them up as soon as we've finished our lunches.

THE MISTRESS. Do. I am sorry to have disturbed you.

THE PARLOURMAID. I won't hurry them, or they'll be eating their prawns without removing the skins. (*She retires.*)

THE MISTRESS (*Glowingly*). Isn't she a refined girl?

THE MASTER. Extremely. But I say, Pussy, is it absolutely necessary to hold this confounded parade?

THE MISTRESS. Not absolutely; but I want to study the expression of their faces while you are making the announcement. (*Walking about.*) Oh, Ernest, is there anything in this world equal to the joy of giving pleasure to others!

THE MASTER. Oh, *I* make the announcement, do I?

THE MISTRESS. Certainly.

THE MASTER. But I haven't heard yet what form the blessed treat is to take.

THE MISTRESS. A theatre.

THE MASTER. Theatre?

THE MISTRESS. Yes, we are going to send them to the play, darling.

THE MASTER. My dear Norma, there are no pantomimes at this time of year.

THE MISTRESS. Pantomimes! These are grown-up, intelligent women, not a parcel of children.

THE MASTER (*Grumblingly*). Well, anyhow it'll be deucedly inconvenient for *us.*

THE MISTRESS (*Halting*). Why, pray?

THE MASTER. Who is to cook and serve our dinner?

THE MISTRESS. Do we *never* dine at a restaurant?

THE MASTER. Often. But we're not in the habit of marching out of the house and leaving it totally unprotected.

THE MISTRESS (*Coming to him and speaking very incisively*). My dear husband, will you have the common fairness to tell me whether I have said they are all to go to the theatre on the same night?

THE MASTER. Er—oh, I beg pardon.

THE MISTRESS. I have planned the affair, in my head, down to the smallest detail. As a matter of fact they are to go in botches.

THE MASTER. I fancy you mean batches.

THE MISTRESS. Don't be so fond of catching me up. Batches. Some one night, some another. (*Melting.*) Oh, Ernest, I am so excited about it! Tum-de-ay; tum-de-ay ——!

(*She seizes him and they do a "glide" round the room. The door opens again and the* PARLOURMAID *returns, followed by the* COOK, *the* USEFUL MAID, *the* HOUSEMAID *and the* KITCHENMAID, *all with their mouths full. The* MASTER *and the* MISTRESS *stop dancing in some confusion.*)

THE MASTER (*Under his breath*). Dash!

THE PARLOURMAID (*To the* MISTRESS). Heah they are. They thought they'd rather get it ovah.

THE MISTRESS. Delighted. (*To the* COOK) Good morning Mrs. Hacket.

THE COOK (*A stolid, ponderous woman*). Good mornin', m'm.

THE MISTRESS (*In the middle of the room*). Will you sit down, please —will everybody sit down? Mr. Dorrington has something to communicate to you. Sit on the settee, some of you. (*To the* HOUSEMAID, *pointing to the chair against the right-hand wall*) Worringham, bring that chair forward. That's right; I want you all to be comfortable.

(*Obviously oppressed by the mystery shrouding the proceedings, the* COOK, *the* KITCHENMAID *and the* USEFUL MAID *seat themselves upon the settee, the* PARLOURMAID *enthrones herself in the chair on the left of the small table, while the* HOUSEMAID *fetches the chair from the right as directed and sits in it at the nearer end of the settee.*)

THE MISTRESS (*To the* MASTER, *in a whisper, gently pushing him towards the middle of the room*). Now, darling.

(*She sits upon the fauteuil-stool and eagerly watches the servants' faces.*)

THE MASTER (*Addressing the servants*). Er— h'm—I should like you to understand that this is an idea of Mrs. Dorrington's—her idea entirely. Er—Mrs. Dorrington desires me to say—er —— (*To the* COOK, *who is steadily munching—irritably*) I am afraid you're not nearly through with your lunch.

(*The* COOK, *moving her jaws regularly, regards him with dull eyes and offers no reply.*)

THE MISTRESS (*Reprovingly*). Ernest!

THE MASTER (*With an effort*). I repeat, I am desired by Mrs. Dorrington to say —— (*The* ODD MAN *enters quietly, closes the door, and advances to the back of the settee, where he takes up an attitude of deep attention. He is a genial, beery-looking individual in a linen jacket and baize apron, and with a dirty leather in his hand*) Who's this?

THE MISTRESS. The Odd Man, dear.

THE MASTER (*In a low voice*). My hat! Do you wish to include *him*?

THE MISTRESS (*Vaguely*). N-no; I hadn't thought of doing so.

THE MASTER (*To the* ODD MAN). What do you want?

THE ODD MAN (*Pointing to the* PARLOURMAID). I'm 'ere in obedjence to a messidge brought by this young lady while we was 'avin' a snack in the 'all.

THE MASTER. Er —— (*To the* MISTRESS, *turning away*) Oh, you take this on, Norma.

THE MISTRESS (*Rising*). Look here—I forget your name—Gage ——

THE ODD MAN. Gale, m'm. G-a-l-e—Gale. Think of wind.

THE MISTRESS. Thank you, there is no need for me to think of wind. Look here, Gale, my message was to the servants ——

THE ODD MAN. Egzackly, m'm ——

THE MISTRESS. Don't interrupt me. I meant the regular servants, those who sleep in the house.

THE ODD MAN. I've dropped off to sleep in the 'ouse more than once. (*To the* COOK) 'Aven't I, Mrs. 'Acket?

THE MISTRESS. Then you oughtn't to have done so. However, I can't discuss the point now. Be good enough to remain downstairs in case the tradesmen's or the visitors' bell rings.

THE ODD MAN (*Lingering*). Right you are, m'm. It's been a misunderstandin' on my part; that's all it's been. The best of us is liable to mistakes ——

THE MASTER (*Rejoining the* MISTRESS—*to the* ODD MAN). Go away; go away.

THE ODD MAN (*Touching his forehead*). Fust time I've a'd the pleasure o' seein' you, sir ——

THE MASTER. The loss has been mutual.

THE ODD MAN. That is, to 'ave a conversation, so to speak ——

THE MASTER. Yes, yes; go away.

THE ODD MAN (*Producing a soiled and torn paper from his pocket*). Where's my list o' dooties—?

THE MASTER. You've got it. Run along.

THE ODD MAN (*Whistling*). Phiou! Lucky I'm *not* required 'ere. My busy mornin'. (*He departs.*)

THE MISTRESS (*To the* MASTER, *reseating herself upon the fauteuil-stool*). Start afresh, darling.

THE MASTER (*Resuming his address*). Er—h'm—as I have already informed you, I am desired by Mrs. Dorrington to—er —— (*To the* COOK, *who is still munching*) For heaven's sake, Mrs. Thingamy, swallow and have done with it!

THE MISTRESS. Ernest! (*The* COOK *gulps painfully*) Oh, Ernest!

THE MASTER. Sorry—sorry.

THE MISTRESS (*Faintly*). Oh, dear! (*To the* MASTER) Once more.

THE MASTER (*To the Servants*). I am desired by Mrs. Dorrington to say that—er—in consideration of—er—your long and valuable services ——

THE MISTRESS. Ernie!

THE MASTER. Hay?

THE MISTRESS. Only a week!

THE MASTER (*Hastily*). *I know, I know* —— (*To the Servants*) In

consideration of the long and valuable services which we have every reason to—er—hope and to—er—expect ——

THE MISTRESS (*Prompting him*). You will render us ——

THE MASTER (*To the Servants*). —every reason to hope and expect that you will render us, it is her wish—our joint wish, in fact—to give you occasionally a little—how shall I describe it? ——

THE MISTRESS. Treat.

THE MASTER. Distraction.

THE MISTRESS. Wholesome amusement.

THE MASTER. And this being our intention, we propose to begin by sending you all to the play ——

THE MISTRESS. The theatre ——

THE MASTER. The theatre. And—er—and—er —— (*To the* MISTRESS) That's all, I believe, Norma?

THE MISTRESS (*To the* MASTER). Thank you, dearest. (*Beaming upon the Servants*) Well? Well? (*There is silence. The* PARLOURMAID *tidies her hair fastidiously. The* HOUSEMAID, *a solemn-visaged young woman, looks down her nose and tightly compresses her lips. The* COOK'S *face remains a blank. The* USEFUL MAID, *a thin, anæmic girl, stares into space with watery eyes. The* KITCHENMAID, *crushed into the further corner of the settee by the* COOK, *is almost completely hidden.*) W-w-well?

THE USEFUL MAID (*Suddenly breaking into sobs and searching for her handkerchief*). O'ho—o'ho—o'ho ——!

THE MASTER (*To the* MISTRESS). Eh? What the ——!

THE MISTRESS (*To the* MASTER). H'sh-sh-sh! (*To the* USEFUL MAID, *soothingly*) Now, Trinder, Trinder, do try to control yourself.

THE USEFUL MAID (*Wiping her eyes*). O'ho—o'ho! Such wonderful kindness *I've* never experienced in any situation *I've* been in!

THE MASTER (*To the* MISTRESS, *in a whisper*). Is she always ——?

THE MISTRESS (*In the same tone, nodding*). Inclined to be a little hysterical—u'm.

THE USEFUL MAID (*To the* MISTRESS). You're the nicest lady *I've* had anything to do with. O'ho—o'ho—o'ho ——!

THE MISTRESS (*Gently*). Trinder—Trinder ——!

THE USEFUL MAID. Mr. Dorrington too! Oh, what a th-th-th-thorough gentleman!

THE MASTER (*To the* MISTRESS). The Useful Maid, isn't she?

THE MISTRESS (*Nodding again*). Yes.

THE MASTER (*Sardonically*). Ha, ha, ha, ha!

THE MISTRESS (*Indignantly*). Ernest!

THE USEFUL MAID (*To the* MASTER). You must excuse me, sir. I'm a trifle run down; that's the truth. (*To the* MISTRESS) Isn't it, m-m-madam?

THE MISTRESS (*Assentingly*). Below par.

THE USEFUL MAID. I've been talking about taking a tonic for ever so long. This decides me.

THE MASTER (*To the* USEFUL MAID). Well, under the Insurance Act ——

THE MISTRESS (*Reproachfully*). Ernie!

THE USEFUL MAID. O'ho—o'ho—o'ho ——!

THE MISTRESS (*To the* USEFUL MAID). H'sh, h'sh, h'sh! There, there! Pull yourself together. I am glad you appreciate what we are doing for you. (*To the* COOK, *brightly*) Now, Mrs. Hacket, it's *your* turn. Let us hear what *you* have to say.

THE COOK (*Heavily*). Me, m'm?

THE MISTRESS. The treat—the visit to the theatre? Wake up, Mrs. Hacket!

THE COOK. Apolergizin' for the question, m'm, I persoom this play-goin' ain't intended to interfere with our usual outs?

THE MISTRESS (*Blankly*). Interfere with your ——?

THE COOK. Becos I don't think *that* 'ud be appreshayted by the gals by any manner o' means.

THE MASTER (*Looking at the* MISTRESS). Upon my soul ——!

THE MISTRESS (*Rising stiffly*). Extraordinary! (*The* MASTER *and the* MISTRESS *change places*) Of course your usual nights out will not be interfered with.

THE COOK. I mealy arst.

THE MISTRESS. Really, Mrs. Hacket ——!

THE COOK. No offence, m'm.

THE MISTRESS (*Tapping her foot upon the floor*). Not the least.

THE COOK. Then it 'ud best be on a Monday night, if it's to be at all.

THE MISTRESS. If it's to be ——!

(ODD MAN *reappears, closing the door as before.*)

THE MASTER. Here's that fellow again!

THE MISTRESS (*To the* ODD MAN). What is it, Gage?

THE ODD MAN (*Advancing*). Gale, m'm. Think of wind.

THE MISTRESS (*Hotly*). I shall *not* think of wind. Does anybody want Mrs. Hacket?

THE ODD MAN (*Leaning upon the back of the settee*). Not that I'm aweer, m'm.

THE MASTER (*Changing places with the* MISTRESS). Then, confound you ——!

THE ODD MAN. It's like this, sir. I've been turnin' the lady's remark over in my mind, as to my not bein' a reg'lar servant ——

THE MASTER. Oh, pickles!

THE ODD MAN. An' the concloosion I 'ave arrived at ——

THE MASTER. You will arrive at a still speedier conclusion, so far as this establishment is concerned, if you're not careful.

THE MISTRESS. Most assuredly.

THE ODD MAN (*Argumentatively*). Yer see, sir, my p'int is ——

THE MASTER. Your *pint!* It looks as if your pint had been a gallon.

THE MISTRESS. Ha!

THE ODD MAN (*Ignoring the suggestion*). My p'int is, that if a employer takes out a Inland Revenoo licence for a 'Andy Man ——

THE MASTER. How dare you attempt to argue with me!

THE ODD MAN. That constitoots 'im a re'lar servant. Therefore ——

THE MISTRESS. Go away.

THE MASTER. Go away.

THE MISTRESS. Keep in the basement.

THE MASTER. Outrageous!

THE MISTRESS. What next?

THE ODD MAN (*Producing his paper again, resignedly*). Where's my list o' dooties?

THE MASTER. You've already referred to it.

THE MISTRESS. It's getting worn out.

THE ODD MAN (*Moving slowly to the door*). I'm gittin' wore out, fairly.

THE MISTRESS. Oh ——!

THE MASTER. Be off!

THE ODD MAN (*At the door, reading his paper*). Hullo! Phiou! Winders! (*He withdraws.*)

THE MISTRESS (*Walking away to the fireplace*). Oh! Oh! (*Pacing up and down*) Terrible person!

THE MASTER (*Pacing up and down the middle of the room*). Dreadful creature! (*Gradually calming himself*) Oh, lor'! (*Wiping his brow*) Stupid to allow one's self to be upset by trifles. Ha, ha, ha! (*To the* PARLOURMAID) Well, my good girl—phew!—what observations have *you* to favor us with, eh?

THE PARLOURMAID (*Languidly*). Observations? With regard to the theatre?

THE MASTER. Precisely; with regard to the theatre.

THE PARLOURMAID. Oh, I'm quite agreeahble, I'm shaw.

THE MASTER. Agreeable!

THE MISTRESS. Agreeable!

THE PARLOURMAID. Provided an extrah seat next to mine is booked for my friend.

THE MASTER. Your ——?

THE MISTRESS (*Coming to the breakfast-table*). Friend?

THE MASTER. Who ——?

THE PARLOURMAID. My fyonsay. I nevah attend places of amusement unaccompanied by my friend.

THE MASTER (*At a loss*). Er—indeed? (*To the* MISTRESS) Perhaps *you* had better deal with this, Norma.

(*The* MISTRESS *advances and the* MASTER *seats himself upon the fauteuil-stool and glares at nothing in particular.*)

THE MISTRESS (*To the* PARLOURMAID). This is the first I've heard of a young man, Beechcroft. How long have you and he been walking out?

THE PARLOURMAID (*Raising her eyebrows higher than ever*). Walking out?

THE MISTRESS. Keeping company.

THE PARLOURMAID. Keeping company?

THE MISTRESS. Keeping company. Don't I speak plainly?

THE PARLOURMAID (*Loftily*). I've known him for yeahs. But our engagement wasn't announced to our respectful families till Febyouaryry.

THE MISTRESS. Respective, not respectful. If you wouldn't try to use words that are beyond you —— (*The telephone bell rings in the hall*) Telephone. (*The* PARLOURMAID *rises and saunters to the*

door) Look sharp. Beechcroft! (*To the* MASTER, *as the* PARLOURMAID *disappears*) I—I—I suppose there's no objection ——?

THE MASTER (*Between his teeth*). Extra ticket?

THE MISTRESS. An additional ticket?

THE MASTER (*Gratingly*). I suppose not.

THE USEFUL MAID (*Indulging in another fit of weeping*). O'ho—o'ho —o'ho! Oh, what kindness!

THE MASTER (*Groaning*). Oh!

THE MISTRESS (*Stamping her foot*). Silence, Trinder! Compose yourself.

THE USEFUL MAID. O'ho—o'ho—o'ho ——! (*The* PARLOURMAID *returns.*)

THE MISTRESS (*To the* PARLOURMAID). Who is it?

THE PARLOURMAID (*Going back to her chair*). Wrong numbah.

THE MISTRESS. Well, Beechcroft, Mr. Dorrington and I have weighed your application carefully and we have decided to accede to it.

THE PARLOURMAID (*Resuming her seat*). An extrah fotool for my friend?

THE MISTRESS (*Graciously*). An additional seat for your friend.

THE PARLOURMAID (*Arranging her apron*). Thenks awf'ly.

THE MASTER. Two.

THE MISTRESS (*To the* MASTER, *surprised*). Two?

THE MASTER. Two extra seats—one for himself and the other for his hat.

THE PARLOURMAID (*To the* MISTRESS, *resentfully*). Reahly, madam ——!

THE MISTRESS (*To the* MASTER, *in a tone of warning*). Ernest ——!

THE USEFUL MAID (*Stuffing her handkerchief into her mouth*). O'ho—o'ho—o'ho ——!

THE MASTER. Great Scot ——!

THE MISTRESS. Be quiet, Trinder!

THE USEFUL MAID. Oh, what liberality! O'ho—o'ho ——

THE COOK (*In a deep voice*). Apolergizin' for the interruption ——

THE MISTRESS (*To the* COOK). What now, Mrs. Hacket?

THE COOK. Apolergizin' for the interruption, if Beechcroft is given permission to bring her friend, I shall expect' to 'ave a ticket took for my nephew.

THE MISTRESS. Your—nephew! (*The* MASTER *rises, grimly and silently.*) Your ——?

THE COOK. My fav'rite nephew.

THE MISTRESS (*To the* MASTER, *falteringly*). Ernest ——?

THE MASTER (*Changing places with the* MISTRESS—*restraining himself with difficulty*). Forgive me for reminding you, Mrs. Hatchet ——

THE MISTRESS. Hacket ——

THE MASTER (*With a wave of the hand*). Forgive me for reminding you that your favourite nephew is not *my* favourite nephew, nor Mrs. Dorrington's.

THE COOK. Neither ain't Beechcroft's friend your friend, comes to that.

THE MASTER. (*His fingers twitching*). True.

THE MISTRESS (*To the* COOK). What is he—this nephew?

THE COOK. 'E's a Dog-exerciser.

THE MISTRESS. Dog-exerciser!

THE MASTER. Dog ——!

THE COOK. 'E exercises pet-dogs for ladies stayin' in 'otels—drags their animals round the Park. 'E's got quite a big connection, Albert 'as. I reckon 'e's 'ead of 'is purfesshun.

THE MISTRESS (*To the* MASTER, *weakly*). Ernie ——

THE COOK. Albert'll end by 'aving 'is portrait in the *Daily Mirror* it is prophesied.

THE MISTRESS (*To the* MASTER). I—I—I suppose th-th-there's no objection ——?

THE MASTER. Extra ticket?

THE MISTRESS. A-n-n-nother ticket?

THE MASTER (*Gutturally*). I suppose not.

THE USEFUL MAID (*Unable to repress her tears*). O'ho—o'ho—o'ho ——!

THE MISTRESS. Trinder ——!

THE USEFUL MAID. Oh, what generosity! Such treatment *I've* never met with, the years *I've* been in service!

THE MISTRESS (*Again pacing the room on the left*). This is maddening!

(*The telephone bell is again heard.*)

THE PARLOURMAID (*Rising*). Telephone.

THE MASTER (*Furiously*). Damn the telephone!

THE HOUSEMAID (*With a sudden jerk and a shiver*). Ho! Ho! *My!* (*The* PARLOURMAID *goes out.*)

THE MISTRESS (*Rejoining the* MASTER *and addressing the* HOUSEMAID *with asperity*). Oh, I'm forgetting you, Worringham. We haven't heard from you yet. How many young men do you wish us to take tickets for?

THE HOUSEMAID (*Severely*). None, m'm.

THE MISTRESS (*Ironically*). None! Astonishing!

THE MASTER (*To the* HOUSEMAID). Oh, come! A favourite cousin ——?

THE HOUSEMAID (*Shaking her head*). I have been brought up much more strict than what most girls in my station of life have been brought up, being a Dissenter, and I have no use for men, young or old.

THE MASTER (*With mock concern*). You appal me.

THE HOUSEMAID. Not that men are holy unnecessary, mark you—I don't go so fur as to maintain that.

THE MASTER. What a relief! Even that partial concession —— (*The* PARLOURMAID *re-enters*) Who is it?

THE PARLOURMAID. Wrong numbah.

THE MASTER (*Angrily*). Pish!

THE PARLOURMAID (*Returning to her chair*). Whereah are we?

THE MASTER. Where *are* we?

THE PARLOURMAID (*Sitting again*). Where-ah have we got to?

THE MASTER. We have got to the desolating disclosure that—er ——

THE MISTRESS. Worringham ——

THE MASTER. That Worringham has a strong antipathy to the male sex.

THE PARLOURMAID (*Disdainfully*). He, he!

THE HOUSEMAID (*To the* PARLOURMAID). Yes, you may laugh, Miss Beechcroft. (*Drawing herself up*) Neither have I—I must avow it —neither have I the slightest use of theatres, *or theatre-going.*

THE MISTRESS (*Gasping*). Oh!

THE HOUSEMAID. A select Cinema now and again, p'raps; but theatres, no. (*To the* MISTRESS) And if I may be pardoned the liberty, m'm, I do think it would ha' been more considerate to have consulted each of us to our partic-lar tastes and likes before seeking to drive us all to the play-'ouse as though we're a flock o' sheep.

THE MISTRESS (*Dropping on to the fauteuil-stool*). Well, I never!

THE MASTER. By Jove, this caps everything!

(*The telephone bell rings again.*)

THE PARLOURMAID (*Rising*). Telephone.

THE MISTRESS (*Starting up*). Damn the telephone!

THE MASTER (*To the* MISTRESS). Norma!

THE HOUSEMAID (*Horrified*). Ho! Ho, dear!

(*The* PARLOURMAID *goes out.*)

THE MASTER (*To the* MISTRESS, *in her ear*). Don't lose your dignity.

THE MISTRESS (*Wildly*). Bah!

THE MASTER. Keep your dignity; keep your dignity.

THE MISTRESS (*Passing him and going to the settee*). Where's Evelyn? Evelyn!

THE MASTER (*Pacing the room on the left*). Who's Evelyn?

THE MISTRESS. The kitchenmaid. (*Stamping her foot*) Evelyn!

THE KITCHENMAID (*Struggling to the surface*). Comin' mum.

THE MISTRESS (*Shaking her finger at the* KITCHENMAID *as the girl succeeds in making herself visible*). Now listen to me, Evelyn. I won't stand any nonsense from *you*. Are *you* a playgoer?

THE KITCHENMAID (*A poor little object with a rough head of hair*). I'm willin' to be, mum. I'm gaime for anythink.

THE MASTER (*Exultantly*). Ha, ha! Evelyn is game for anything!

THE MISTRESS (*Unsteadily*). Ha, ha! That's a comfort. (*To the* KITCHENMAID) And do *you* demand an extra ticket, child, for a friend or relation?

THE KITCHENMAID. No, mum, thank yer; I got no relations or acquaintances wotsoever.

THE COOK (*To the* KITCHENMAID, *smothering her again*). 'Ere, don't you be so talkative.

(*The* PARLOURMAID *returns.*)

THE MISTRESS (*To* PARLOURMAID). Who is it?

THE PARLOURMAID. Wrong numbah.

THE MISTRESS (*Going to the fireplace and clinging to the mantelpiece*). Gur-r-r-rh!

THE MASTER (*Coming to the middle of the room*). Curse that Exchange of ours!

THE PARLOURMAID (*Coldly*). I have just done so.

THE HOUSEMAID (*Shuddering*). Ho!

THE PARLOURMAID (*Reseating herself*). Where-ah are we?

THE MASTER (*His hand to his brow*). Where are we?

THE PARLOURMAID. Where-ah have we got to?

THE MASTER (*Wearily*). To the discovery of the pleasing circumstance that Evelyn—(*Looking at the settee*) who was here a minute ago—that Evelyn is potentially a patron of the Drama. (*The door reopens and the* ODD MAN *appears again. He is carrying a pail of water, some dusters, and his leather. He closes the door softly and goes towards the window. The* MASTER *reels against the breakfast-table*) Norma ——!

THE MISTRESS. (*Turning*). Merciful Powers!

THE MASTER (*Intercepting the* ODD MAN *and bringing him forward*). Blizzard ——

THE ODD MAN. Gale, sir. Think of wind.

THE MASTER. I do; but mere wind seems to express the situation inadequately. (*Pointing to the pail*) What's this?

THE ODD MAN (*Depositing the pail upon the floor and producing his paper*). Where's my list o' dooties?

THE MISTRESS (*Sitting in the chair on the left of the breakfast-table and clasping her temples*). Oh, Ernest!

THE ODD MAN (*Indicating, with a dirty forefinger, an instruction in his paper*). See year.

THE MASTER (*Blinking at the paper*). The words swim before me.

THE ODD MAN (*Reading*). "*Thursday.*" What's to-day?

THE MASTER. Thursday.

THE ODD MAN. "Thursday." (*Pointing to instructions on paper*) "Clean mornin'-room winders." (*He replaces the paper in his pocket and is about to pick up the pail.*)

THE MASTER (*Touching the* ODD MAN'S *arm, with terrible calmness*). No. You have conquered by the aid of fate and a superior intelligence. Sit down. You are a regular servant.

(*Displaying great alacrity, the* ODD MAN *takes the chair from before the writing table and seats himself by the* PARLOURMAID. *The* MASTER *sits in the chair at the further side of the breakfast-table and rests his head upon his hands.*)

THE USEFUL MAID (*Her bosom heaving*). O'ho—o'ho—o'ho ——!

THE MISTRESS (*Stopping her ears*). Ah, don't!

THE USEFUL MAID. Oh, what soft-heartedness! O'ho ——

THE MISTRESS (*Frantically*). Trinder ——!

THE USEFUL MAID (*Her sobs subsiding*). O'ho—o'ho—o'ho ——!

THE MISTRESS (*Sinking back in her chair, exhausted*). Oh!

THE ODD MAN (*After a look round, coughing to attract the* MASTER'S *attention*). Ahem! Ahem! May I ventcher for to arsk ——?

THE MASTER (*Raising his head*). What is all this year about.

THE ODD MAN. Egzactly, sir.

THE MASTER (*To the* ODD MAN). I will answer your question with another. Are you a playgoer?

THE ODD MAN (*Appealing to the air*). Am I a playgoer! (*To the* MASTER, *volubly*) Don't my mother keep a small shop in Crawford Street' Mary'bone, an' ain't she continu'ly receivin' orders for exhibitin' the theayter bills?

THE MASTER. Indeed?

THE ODD MAN. Yus, indeed. An' the wus the failyers at the theayters, the quicker the orders flows in.

THE MASTER. Doubtless.

THE ODD MAN. Why, lor' bless yer, sir, we liter'y *pray* for fiarscos, mother an' me!

THE MASTER. Enough. I am satisfied that you are, in the fullest sense, a patron of the Drama. (*To the* MISTRESS, *whose eyes are closed*) My darling, all that is left to do, it seems to me, is to complete the arrangements for the—er—approaching festivity.

THE ODD MAN (*Joyously*). What! (*Slapping his thigh*) Do I guess right! Is there a beano on?

THE MASTER (*To the* ODD MAN). You are correct in your surmise. There *is* a beano on. (*To the* MISTRESS) Norma ——?

THE COOK (*As the* MISTRESS *opens her eyes*). Apolergizin' for the interruption ——

THE MISTRESS (*Shutting her eyes again, feebly*). Oh!

THE COOK. Apolergizin' for the interruption, as Worringham ain't to be one o' the party, she will be able to mind the 'ouse durin' our absences an' warm our suppers.

THE ODD MAN (*Following the proceedings with the keenest interest*). 'Ear, 'ear!

THE HOUSEMAID (*To the* COOK, *bridling*). Ho, no, she won't; cert'nly not!

THE MISTRESS (*Again opening her eyes*). That is for *me* to decide.

THE HOUSEMAID (*To the* MISTRESS). Begging your pardon, m'm, but I never said I wasn't ready to sarifice my priv'it feelings and beliefs, and to go to the theatre, to oblige.

THE MISTRESS (*Rallying*). To oblige!

THE MASTER. Oblige!

THE HOUSEMAID (*To the* MASTER). Yes, sir, for the sake o' my feller-servants as well as for yours and Mrs. Dorrington's.

THE MASTER. For the sake of your ——?

THE HOUSEMAID. To give the party an air of respectability, as it wear.

THE COOK. Respectability!

THE PARLOURMAID. Respectability!

THE COOK (*To the* PARLOURMAID). I'd 'ave you know, Miss Grace Worringham ——

THE PARLOURMAID. Insulting cat!

THE ODD MAN (*Softly*). Order, order!

THE USEFUL MAID (*Weeping*). O'ho, what dissensions! O'ho ——!

THE KITCHENMAID (*Endeavoring to bring herself into view*). 'Ere lem'me say somethink!

THE COOK (*To the* KITCHENMAID). You shut up, Evelyn Platch.

THE PARLOURMAID (*Derisively*). He, he, he, he!

THE MISTRESS (*Struggling to her feet*). Stop! Stop ——! (*The telephone bell rings again.*) Telephone!

THE PARLOURMAID (*Rising*). Damn the 'phone!

THE MISTRESS. Beechcroft!

THE HOUSEMAID (*Clapping her hand to her heart*). Ho! Ho, my goodness!

(*The* PARLOURMAID *stalks out.*)

THE MISTRESS (*Leaning upon the breakfast-table, panting*). You—you'll drive me into a lunatic asylum, amongst you!

THE MASTER (*Rising and approaching the* MISTRESS). My darling, you must not agitate yourself —— (*Barking his shin against the pail*) Oh ——!

THE MISTRESS (*Sympathetically*). Oh, Ernie!

THE MASTER (*In great pain*). Ah! (*Picking up the pail*) Tsss ——!

THE ODD MAN (*To the* MASTER, *not stirring*). Now you see, sir, 'ow easy accidents 'appen to us dermestics. On'y yusterday ——

THE MASTER (*To the* MISTRESS). You must *not* agitate yourself in this way, Pussy. (*Wincing*) Your original plan—tell them ——

THE MISTRESS (*Advancing to the* SERVANTS). My plan is, not to send you all to the theatre on the same night, but in botches ——

THE MASTER (*Close behind her*). Batches.

THE MISTRESS (*To the* MASTER, *on the verge of tears*). Oh, don't catch me up so! (*To servants*) Mrs. Hacket and her nephew, Evelyn and Trinder are to go first; Worringham, Beechcroft and her friend, and—and—and —— (*To the* MASTER) What's his name ——?

THE MASTER (*Savagely*). Typhoon ——

THE MISTRESS (*To the servants*). Typhoon—(*darting a glance of reproach at the* MASTER) no, it isn't!—(*pointing to the* ODD MAN) and *him* the second night.

THE MASTER (*To the* MISTRESS). *He* the second night.

THE MISTRESS (*To the* MASTER). Don't!

THE ODD MAN (*To the* MISTRESS). I'll go *both* nights, m'm if it'll promote 'armony.

THE MISTRESS (*To the* ODD MAN). You shall do nothing of the sort!

THE USEFUL MAID (*Weeping copiously*). I'd stay at home and hot up the suppers with glee.

THE MISTRESS (*Frenzied*). Oh ——!

THE COOK. Apolergizin' for the interruption ——

THE MISTRESS (*To the* COOK). *Now* what ——?

THE COOK. Apolergizin' for the interruption, in all good 'ouses, whenever there's a speshul out, the cook goes with the butler.

THE MISTRESS. We don't keep a butler.

THE MASTER. We don't keep a butler.

THE COOK (*Emphatically*). An' where no butler is kep', she goes with the parlourmaid.

THE MASTER (*To the* MISTRESS, *in a whisper*). Rearrange it! Rearrange it!

THE MISTRESS (*To the* MASTER). I won't! (*To the* COOK, *fiercely*) Mrs. Hacket ——!

THE COOK. Oh, I merely stated wot is custom'ry in *good* 'ouses ——

THE ODD MAN (*To the* MISTRESS). Count *me* as the butler, m'h, if it'll 'elp yer out of yer mess.

THE MISTRESS. I won't! (*To the* PARLOURMAID, *who reappears at this juncture and returns to her chair*) Who was it?

THE PARLOURMAID (*Distantly*). My friend.

THE MASTER (*Changing places with the* MISTRESS—*to the* PARLOURMAID). Impudence!

THE PARLOURMAID (*To the* MASTER). Reahly!

THE MISTRESS (*Discovering that the* MASTER *is unthinkingly carrying the pail about with him—under her breath*). Oh! Ernest ——!

THE PARLOURMAID (*Seating herself*). Where-ah are we?

THE MASTER (*To the* PARLOURMAID). Oh, we can't keep on going back for *you*, you know.

THE MISTRESS. Ernie ——!

THE MASTER (*To the* MISTRESS, *over his shoulder*). Hay?

THE PARLOURMAID (*Deeply injured*). Oh, very well, then I shall lose the thread of it.

THE MASTER (*To the* PARLOURMAID). All right, then, you've *got* to lose the thread of it.

THE MISTRESS. Ernest ——!

THE MASTER (*Turning to the* MISTRESS). What *is* it?

THE MISTRESS (*Looking at him significantly*). Pail!

THE MASTER (*Self-pityingly*). Pale, am I? (*Passing his hand across his face*) I don't wonder.

THE MISTRESS. No, no. (*Taking the pail from him*) Give it to me.

THE MASTER. Oh ——!

THE MISTRESS (*In his ear*). You are losing your dignity. (*She moves away with the pail and stands it upon the floor between the fireplace and the breakfast-table.*)

THE ODD MAN (*To the* MASTER, *highly tickled by his strange behaviour*). Ho, ho! Fancy you, sir, walkin' about with a pail *for choice.* Ho, ho, ho! That beats me.

THE MASTER (*Light-headedly*). Ha, ha, ha, ha!

THE COOK. Apolergizin' for the interruption ——

THE MASTER (*To the* COOK). Don't mention it.

THE COOK. Apolergizin' for the 'interruption, 'pears to me there is on'y one more little matter to be disposed of.

THE MASTER. One—more ——?

THE COOK. Wot theatre, an' *wot* play, are we all to be packed off to?

THE MASTER. Quite so; quite so. (*Eyeing the* MISTRESS, *who, with a*

look of leaden apathy, has sunk down upon the fauteuil-stool) Dearest ——?

THE USEFUL MAID (*With a wail*). O'hooo! I'm for a hearty laugh, I am.

THE ODD MAN (*Slapping his leg again*). So'm I! So'm I!

THE USEFUL MAID (*Blubbering*). I was always celebrated for my gaiety till my teeth failed me.

THE HOUSEMAID. As for laughter, nobody can laugh louder than what I can, when provoked. (*Straightening her back*) The play I will *not* consent to witness is the play containin' love an' passion.

THE KITCHENMAID (*Coming to the surface again*). 'Ere, I've no sech objection!

THE COOK (*To the* KITCHENMAID). You 'old your tongue, Evelyn.

THE ODD MAN (*To the* HOUSEMAID). G'arn! Don't be so simple. They on'y pretend.

THE HOUSEMAID. Pretend. (*Quiveringly*) I've heard. Lips glued to lips!

THE PARLOURMAID (*Icily*). If I may pass a remark ——

THE MASTER (*To the* PARLOURMAID). You may.

THE PARLOURMAID. The propah thing to do is to wait and consult my friend.

THE HOUSEMAID (*Witheringly*). Your friend! (*Sniffing*) Why not Mrs. Hacket's nephew while you're about it!

THE COOK (*To* HOUSEMAID). Yus, an'w'y not!

THE HOUSEMAID. Ho!

THE PARLOURMAID (*Curling her lip at the* HOUSEMAID). Cheek!

THE COOK (*To the* HOUSEMAID). Utter a syllerble against my nephew ——!

THE ODD MAN (*Pacifically*). Cookie, cookie, cookies ——!

THE USEFUL MAID (*Weeping*). O'ho! Dissension on dissension!

THE KITCHENMAID. 'Ere ——!

THE MISTRESS (*Rousing herself*). Silence!

THE MASTER (*To the* MISTRESS, helplessly). Norma ——?

THE MISTRESS (*Starting up and advancing to the servants*). Now understand me clearly, once and for all. You servants will go exactly where Mr. Dorrington and I choose to send you.

THE ODD MAN (*To the* MISTRESS). I 'aven't been to one o' the 'alls lately, m'm ——

THE MISTRESS (*To the* ODD MAN). Silence! (*To the female servants*) And that will be to no entertainment of a trivial and frivolous character.

THE ODD MAN (*Urgently*). Mother don't git no paper for the 'alls.

THE MISTRESS (*To the* ODD MAN). Be quiet! (*To the female servants*) What you *will* see is a play of ideas, something to stimulate your imaginations and make you think.

THE COOK. Ideers!

THE PARLOURMAID (*With a sickly expression*). Make us think!

THE ODD MAN (*Gloomily*). Crikey!

THE MISTRESS. A slice cut clean out of life, in fact. (*Desperately*) You follow me?

THE HOUSEMAID. Sounds 'orribly crool.

THE KITCHENMAID (*Awe-struck*). Does that mean that knives is freely used, mum?

THE MISTRESS. Not necessarily—except by the Censor.

THE COOK (*After a pause, during which the servants look at each other inquiringly*). Well any'ow, gals, it strikes me we're in for a preshus dull evenin'.

THE MISTRESS (*Throwing up her arms*). Oh ——!

THE MASTER (*Who has been fuming at the back of the room*). Oh ——! (*Coming to grief over the pail again as he hurries to the* MISTRESS) Dash and blow!

THE MISTRESS (*Turning to him*). Ernest!

THE MASTER (*Limping towards her*). Ah! Tsss! (*Shaking his fist at the* COOK) *You—you*—you ill-conditioned, odious old woman!

THE COOK. Odious!

THE MISTRESS (*To the* COOK). Odious!

THE COOK. Old!

THE MISTRESS (*To the* COOK). You told me you were forty. Forty!

THE MASTER (*Rubbing his leg*). Fifty if she's a day!

THE COOK (*To the* MISTRESS). I was forty a week ago, before I entered your service. This is the lars' stror. I leave at the end o' my month.

THE MISTRESS. Do!

THE MASTER. Do!

THE COOK. An' wot's more, I take my kitchen maid with me.

THE MISTRESS. Certainly.

THE MASTER. Certainly.

THE PARLOURMAID. *I* leave also.

THE HOUSEMAID. *An'* me.

THE USEFUL MAID. An' *me.*

THE PARLOURMAID. I reahly couldn't remain in a place where-ah changes are so frequently made. Most disadvantageous.

THE HOUSEMAID. Nor I where such langwidge is spoke as 'as been spoke this morning in my hearing.

THE USEFUL MAID (*Weeping*). To be thrown with a strange set o' girls after being p-p-perfectly happy with this set 'ud be more than I could bear. O'ho—o'ho ——!

THE MISTRESS (*Hysterically*). Ha, ha, ha, ha! (*To the* MASTER) And this—ha, ha!—and this is the result of my new system! Ha, ha, ha, ha!

(*Led by the* COOK, *all the female servants rise, the* COOK *clutching the* KITCHENMAID.)

THE COOK (*To the* MISTRESS). Noo systum, yer call it! A nice noo systum. I 'ope it'll be a less'n to you both, not treat fus'-clars servants patronizin'ly an' condescendin'ly.

THE MASTER (*Advancing*). Oh, go to the devil!

THE COOK (*To the* MASTER). At any rate, with *'im* I shouldn't 'ave the constant complaints I've 'ad in this 'ouse about there bein' no 'ot water for the baths.

THE MISTRESS (*To the* MASTER). *Yah-h-h-h!* Now we've laid ourselves open to repartee!

THE COOK (*To the servants*). Come 'long, an' let's resoom our lunches.

(*The female servants make for the door, murmuring as they go.*)

THE KITCHENMAID (*Still in the grip of the* COOK, *sullenly*). 'Ere, I dun'no where I am!

THE HOUSEMAID. I had a foreboding I'd got with dessolute people, from the first.

THE USEFUL MAID. O'ho—o'ho ——!

THE PARLOURMAID. Shouldn't be surprised if this exhilarates my marriage.

THE COOK. Odious! An' old! Ho, ho, ho!

(*They take their departure and the door is closed with a slam.*)

THE MISTRESS (*Clinging to the* MASTER *and breaking down*). Oh-h-h ——!

THE MASTER. Never mind, Pussy; never mind. Pluck up.

THE MISTRESS (*Crying upon his shoulder*). Oh! Oh! Oh! All the ground to go over again! All over again!

(*They become conscious that they are not alone, and that the* ODD MAN *is standing by the settee and regarding them benevolently.*)

THE MASTER (*To the* MISTRESS, *hoarsely*). No; not all!

THE MISTRESS (*In a whisper*). The Odd Man!

(*Very quickly she fetches the pail and hands it to the* MASTER.)

THE MASTER (*Presenting it to the* ODD MAN, *with an ingratiating smile*). Allow me ——

CURTAIN

THE BOOR [1]

Anton Tchekoff

(English version by Barrett H. Clark and H. R. Baukhage)

CHARACTERS

HELENA IVANOVNA POPOV (*a young widow, mistress of a country estate*).
GRIGORJI STEPANOVITCH SMIRNOV (*proprietor of a country estate*).
LUKA (*servant of Mrs. Popov*).
A GARDENER.
A COACHMAN.
SEVERAL WORKMEN.
PLACE: *The Estate of Mrs. Popov.*
TIME: *The Present.*
(*The stage shows an elegantly furnished drawing-room.*)
(MRS. POPOV *discovered in deep mourning, sitting upon a sofa, gazing steadfastly at a photograph.* LUKA *is also present.*)

LUKA. It isn't right, ma'am—You're wearing yourself out! The maid and the cook have gone looking for berries; everything that breathes is enjoying life, even the cat knows how to be happy—slips about the courtyard and catches birds; but you hide yourself here in the house as though you were in a cloister and have no pleasures. By actual reckoning you haven't left this house for a whole year.

MRS. POPOV. I shall never leave it—why should I? My life is over. He lies in his grave, and I have buried myself within these four walls. We are both dead.

LUKA. There you are again! It's too dreadful to listen to, so it is!

[1] Reprinted by permission of Samuel French.

Nikolai Michailovitch is dead; it was the will of the Lord, and the Lord has given him eternal peace. You have grieved over it and that ought to be enough. Now it's time to stop. One can't weep and wear mourning forever! My wife died a few years ago. I grieved for her, I wept a whole month—and then it was over. Must one be forever singing lamentations? That would be more than your husband was worth! (*He sighs.*) You have neglected all your neighbours. You don't go out and you receive no one. We live,—you'll pardon me—like the spiders, and the good light of day we never see. All the livery is eaten by the mice—as though there weren't any more nice people in the world! Why, the whole neighbourhood is full of gentlefolk. The regiment is stationed in Riblov, officers—simply beautiful! One can't see enough of them! Every Friday a ball, and military music every day. Oh, my dear, dear madam, young and pretty as you are, if you'd only let your spirits live! Beauty can't last forever. When ten short years are over, then you'll be glad enough to go out a bit and meet the officers—and then it'll be too late.

MRS. POPOV (*resolutely*). Please, don't speak of these things to me again. You know very well that since the death of Nikolai Michailovitch my life means absolutely nothing to me. You think I live, but it only seems so. Do you understand? Oh, that his departed soul may see how I love him! I know, it's no secret to you; he was often unjust toward me, cruel and—he wasn't faithful, but I shall be faithful to the grave and prove to him how *I* can love. There, in the beyond, he'll find me the same as I was until his death.

LUKA. What is the use of all these words, when you'd so much rather go walking in the garden or order Tobby or Welikan harnessed to the trap, and visit the neighbours?

MRS. POPOV (*weeping*). Oh!

LUKA. Madam, dear, dear Madam, what is it? In heaven's name!

MRS. POPOV. He loved Tobby so! He always drove him to the Kortschagins or the Vlassovs. What a wonderful horseman he was! How fine he looked when he pulled the reins. Tobby, Tobby—give him an extra measure of oats to-day!

LUKA. Yes, ma'am. (*A bell rings loudly.*)

MRS. POPOV (*shudders*). What's that? I am at home to no one.

LUKA. Yes, ma'am. (*He goes out center.*)

MRS. POPOV (*gazing at the photograph.*) You shall see, Nikol, how I can love and forgive! My love will die only with me—when my poor heart stops beating. (*She smiles through her tears.*) Aren't you ashamed? I have been a good, true wife, I have imprisoned myself and I shall remain true until death, and you—you—you're not ashamed of yourself, my dear monster! You used to quarrel with me, left me alone for weeks ——

(LUKA *enters in great excitement.*)

LUKA. Oh, ma'am, some one is asking for you, insists on seeing you ——

MRS. POPOV. You told him that since my husband's death I receive no one?

LUKA. I said so, but he won't listen; says it is a pressing matter.

MRS. POPOV. I will receive no one.

LUKA. I told him that, but he's a wildman, he swore and pushed himself into the room—he's in the dining-room now.

MRS. POPOV (*excitedly*). Good. Show him in. The impudent ——!

(LUKA *goes out center.*)

MRS. POPOV. What a bore people are! What can they want with me? Why do they disturb my peace? (*She sighs.*) Yes, it is clear I must enter a convent. (*Meditatively.*) Yes, a convent—(SMIRNOV *enters, followed by* LUKA.)

SMIRNOV (*to* LUKA). Fool, you make too much noise! You're an ass! (*Discovering* MRS. POPOV—*politely.*) Madam, I have the honor to introduce myself; Lieutenant in the Artillery, retired, country gentleman, Grigorji Stepanovitch Smirnov! I'm compelled to bother you about an exceedingly important matter.

MRS. POPOV (*without offering her hand*). What is it you wish?

SMIRNOV. Your deceased husband, with whom I had the honour to be acquainted, left me two notes amounting to about twelve hundred rubles. Inasmuch as I have to pay the interest to-morrow on a loan from the Agrarian Bank, I should like to request, madam, that you pay me the money to-day.

MRS. POPOV. Twelve hundred—and for what was my husband indebted to you?

SMIRNOV. He had bought oats from me.

MRS. POPOV (*with a sigh to* LUKA). Don't forget to give Tobby an extra measure of oats. (LUKA *goes out.*)

MRS. POPOV (*to* SMIRNOV). If Nikolai Michailovitch is indebted to you, I will of course pay you, but, I am sorry, I haven't the money to-day. To-morrow my manager will be back from the city and I shall notify him to pay you what is due you, but until then I cannot satisfy your request. Furthermore, to-day is just seven months since the death of my husband and I am in no mood to discuss money matters.

SMIRNOV. And I am in a mood to fly up the chimney feet foremost if I can't lay hands on that interest to-morrow. They'll seize my estate!

MRS. POPOV. Day after to-morrow you will receive the money.

SMIRNOV. I don't need the money day after to-morrow, I need it to-day.

MRS. POPOV. I'm sorry I can't pay you to-day.

SMIRNOV. And I can't wait until day after to-morrow.

MRS. POPOV. But what can I do if I haven't it?

SMIRNOV. You can't pay?

MRS. POPOV. I cannot.

SMIRNOV. Is that your last word?

MRS. POPOV. My last.

SMIRNOV. Absolutely?

MRS. POPOV. Absolutely.

SMIRNOV. Thank you. (*He shrugs his shoulders.*) And they expect me to stand for that. The toll gatherer just now met me in the road and asked me why I was always worrying. Why in Heaven's name shouldn't I worry? I need money, I feel the knife at my throat. Yesterday morning I left my house in the early dawn and called on all my debtors. If even one of them had paid what he owed me! I worked the skin off my fingers! The devil knows in what sort of inn I slept, in a room with a barrel of brandy! And now at last I come here, seventy versts from home, expect a little money, and all you give me is *moods*! Why shouldn't I worry?

MRS. POPOV. I thought I made it plain to you that when my manager returns from town, you will get your money.

SMIRNOV. I did not come to see the manager, I came to see you.

What the devil—pardon the language—do I care for your manager?

MRS. POPOV. Really, sir, I am not used to such language or such manners. I shan't listen to you. (*She goes out left.*)

SMIRNOV. What can one say to that? Moods! Seven months since her husband died! Do I have to pay the interest or not? I repeat the question, have I to pay the interest or not? The husband is dead and all that; the manager is—the devil with him—traveling somewhere. Now tell me, what am I to do? Shall I run away from my creditors in a balloon? Or knock my head against a stone wall? If I call on Grusdev he chooses to be "not at home," I quarreled with Kurzin and came near throwing him out of the window, Masutov is ill and this woman in here has—moods! Not one of them will pay up! All because I've spoiled them, because I'm an old whiner, a dish-rag! I'm too tender-hearted with them. But wait! I'll allow nobody to play tricks with me, the devil take 'em all! I'll stay here and not budge until she pays! Brrr! How angry I am, how terribly angry I am! Every tendon trembles with anger and I can hardly breathe! I'm falling ill. (*He calls out.*) Servant! (LUKA *enters.*)

LUKA. What is it you wish?

SMIRNOV. Bring me Kvas—or water! (LUKA *goes out.*) Well, what can we do? She hasn't the cash? What sort of logic is that? A fellow stands with the knife at his throat, needs money, is on point of hanging himself, and she won't pay because she isn't in the mood to discuss money matters. See! Woman's logic! That's why I never liked to talk to women. I'd rather sit on a powder-barrel. Brr!—I'm getting cold as ice, this affair has made me so angry. I need only to see such a romantic creature from a distance to get so angry that I have cramps in my calves. It's enough to make one yell for help! (*Enter* LUKA.)

LUKA (*hands him water*). Madam is ill and is not receiving.

SMIRNOV. March! (LUKA *goes out.*) Ill, and isn't receiving! All right, it isn't necessary. *I* won't receive, either! I'll sit here and wait until you bring the money. If you're ill a week, I'll sit here a week. If you're ill a year, I'll sit here a year. Heaven is my witness, I'll get the money. You don't disturb me with your mourning —or with your dimples. We know these dimples! (*He calls out*

the window.) Simon, unharness. We aren't going yet. I am going to stay here. Tell them in the stable to give the horses some oats. The left horse has twisted the bridle again. (*Imitating him.*) Stop! I'll show you how! Stop! (*Leaves window.*) Awful! Unbearable heat, no money, no sleep last night and now—mourning-dresses with moods. My head aches; perhaps I ought to have a drink. Ye-s, I must have a drink. (*Calling.*) Servant!

LUKA. What is it you wish?

SMIRNOV. Drink. (LUKA *goes out.* SMIRNOV *sits down and looks at his clothes.*) Ugh, a fine figure! No denying it. Dust, dirty boots, unwashed, uncombed, straw on my vest—the lady probably took me for a highwayman. (*He yawns.*) It was a little impolite to come into a drawing-room with such clothes. Oh well, no harm done. I'm not here as guest. I'm a creditor. And there is no special costume for creditors.

LUKA (*entering with glass*). You take a great deal of liberty, sir.

SMIRNOV (*angrily*). What?

LUKA. I—I—I just ——

SMIRNOV. Whom are you talking to? Keep quiet.

LUKA (*angrily*). Nice mess! This fellow won't leave! (*He goes out.*)

SMIRNOV. Lord, how angry I am! Angry enough to throw mud at the whole world! I feel sick—servant! (MRS. POPOV *comes in with downcast eyes.*)

MRS. POPOV. Sir, in my solitude I have become unaccustomed to the human voice and I cannot stand the sound of loud talking. I beg of you, please to cease disturbing my quiet.

SMIRNOV. Pay me my money and I'll leave.

MRS. POPOV. I told you once, plainly, in your native tongue that I haven't the money on hand; wait until day after to-morrow.

SMIRNOV. And *I* had the honour of informing you in your native tongue that I need the money, not the day after to-morrow, but to-day. If you don't pay me to-day, I shall have to hang myself to-morrow.

MRS. POPOV. But what can I do if I haven't the money? How strange!

SMIRNOV. So you are not going to pay me immediately?

MRS. POPOV. I cannot.

SMIRNOV. Then I'll sit here until I get it. (*He sits.*) You will pay the day after to-morrow? Excellent! Here I stay until day after

to-morrow. (*Jumps up.*) I ask you: do I have to pay that interest to-morrow or not? Or do you think I'm joking?

MRS. POPOV. Sir, I beg of you, don't scream! This is not a stable.

SMIRNOV. I'm not asking you about stables, I'm asking you whether I have to pay that interest to-morrow or not?

MRS. POPOV. You have no idea how to treat a lady. You are an ill-bred, vulgar person. Respectable people don't speak so to ladies.

SMIRNOV. How do you want one to speak with you? In French, perhaps? *Madame, je vous prie*—pardon me for having disturbed you. What beautiful weather we are having! And how this mourning becomes you. (*He makes a low bow.*)

MRS. POPOV. Not at all funny—vulgar!

SMIRNOV (*imitating her*). Not at all funny—vulgar. I don't understand how to behave in the company of ladies. Madam, in the course of my life I have seen more women than you have sparrows. Three times have I fought duels for women; twelve women I jilted and nine jilted me. There was a time when I played the fool, used honeyed words and bowed and scraped. I loved, suffered, sighed to the moon, melted in love's torments. I loved passionately, loved in every key, chattered like a magpie, sacrificed half my fortune in the tender passion. But now the devil knows I've had enough of it. Your obedient servant will let you lead him around by the nose no more. Enough! Black eyes, passionate eyes, coral lips, dimpled cheeks, moonlight whispers, soft, modest sighs —for all that, madam, I wouldn't pay you a kopeck. I am not speaking of the present company but of women in general; from the tiniest to the greatest, they are all conceited, hypocritical, chattering, odious, deceitful from top to toe; vain, petty, cruel with a maddening logic, and (*strikes his forehead*) in this respect, excuse my frankness, a single sparrow is worth ten of the aforementioned petticoat-philosophers. When one sees one of the romantic creatures before him, he imagines he is looking at some holy being, so wonderful that its one breath could dissolve him in a sea of a thousand charms and delights; but if one looks into the soul—it's nothing but a common crocodile. (*He seizes the armchair and breaks it.*) And the worst of all is that this crocodile imagines that it is a masterpiece of creation, and that it has a monopoly on all the tender passions. Devil hang me upside down

if there is anything to love about a woman! When she is in love she knows only how to complain and shed tears. If the man suffers and makes sacrifices, she swings her train about and tries to lead him by the nose. You have the misfortune to be a woman and naturally you know woman's nature; tell me on your honour, have you ever in your life seen a woman who was really true and faithful? Never! Only the old and the deformed are true and faithful. It's easier to find a cat with horns or a white woodcock than a faithful woman.

MRS. POPOV. But just allow me to ask, who is true and faithful in love? The man, perhaps?

SMIRNOV. Yes, indeed! The man!

MRS. POPOV. The man! (*She laughs sarcastically.*) The man is true and faithful in love! Well, that is something new. (*Bitterly.*) How can you make such a statement? Men true and faithful! Since we have gone as far as we have, I may as well say that of all the men I have known, my husband was the best; I loved him passionately with all my soul, as only a young, sensible woman can love; I gave him my youth, my happiness, my fortune, my life. I worshiped him like a heathen. And what happened? This best of men betrayed me in every possible way. After his death I found his desk filled with love letters. While he was alive he left me alone for months—it is horrible to even think about it; he made love to other women in my very presence, wasted my money and made fun of my feelings, but in spite of everything, I trusted him and was true to him. More than that: he is dead and I am still true to him. I have buried myself within these four walls and I shall wear this mourning to my grave.

SMIRNOV (*laughing disrespectfully*). Mourning! What on earth do you take me for? As if I didn't know why you wore this black domino and why you bury yourself within these four walls. So romantic! Some knight will pass the castle, will gaze up at the windows and think to himself: "Here dwells the mysterious Tamara who, for love of her husband, has closed herself within four walls." Oh, I understand the art!

MRS. POPOV (*springing up*). What? What do you mean by saying such things to me?

SMIRNOV. You have buried yourself alive, but meanwhile you have not forgotten to powder your nose!

MRS. POPOV. How dare you speak to me so?

SMIRNOV. Don't scream at me, please, I'm not the manager. Just let me call things by their right names. I am not a woman, and I am accustomed to say what I think. So please don't scream.

MRS. POPOV. I'm not screaming. It is you who are screaming. Please leave me, I beg you.

SMIRNOV. Pay me my money and I'll leave.

MRS. POPOV. I won't give you the money.

SMIRNOV. You won't give me my money?

MRS. POPOV. I don't care what you do. You won't get a kopeck! Leave me!

SMIRNOV. As I haven't the pleasure of being either your husband or your *fiancé*, please don't make a scene. (*He sits down.*) I can't stand it.

MRS. POPOV (*breathing hard*). You are going to sit down?

SMIRNOV. I already have.

MRS. POPOV. Kindly leave the house!

SMIRNOV. Give me the money.

MRS. POPOV. I don't care to speak with impudent men. Leave! (*Pause.*) You aren't going?

SMIRNOV. No.

MRS. POPOV. No?

SMIRNOV. No.

MRS. POPOV. Very well. (*She rings the bell. Enter* LUKA.)

MRS. POPOV. Luka, show the gentleman out.

LUKA (*going to* SMIRNOV). Sir, why don't you leave when you are ordered? What do you want ——

SMIRNOV (*jumping up*). Whom do you think you are talking to? I'll grind you to powder.

LUKA (*puts his hand to his heart*). Good Lord! (*He drops into a chair.*) I'm ill, I can't breathe!

MRS. POPOV. Where is Dascha? (*Calling.*) Dascha! Pelageja! Dascha! (*She rings.*)

LUKA. They're all gone! I'm ill. Water!

MRS. POPOV (*to* SMIRNOV). Leave! Get out!

SMIRNOV. Kindly be a little more polite!

MRS. POPOV (*striking her fists and stamping her feet*). You are vulgar! You're a boor! A monster!

SMIRNOV. What did you say?

MRS. POPOV. I said you were a boor, a monster!

SMIRNOV (*steps toward her quickly*). Permit me to ask, by what right you insult me?

MRS. POPOV. Do you think I am afraid of you?

SMIRNOV. You think that because you are a romantic creature you can insult me without being punished? I challenge you! Now you have it.

LUKA. Merciful Heaven! Water!

SMIRNOV. A duel!

MRS. POPOV. Do you think because you have big fists and a steer's neck that I am afraid of you?

SMIRNOV. I allow no one to insult me and I make no exception because you are a woman, one of the "weaker sex"!

MRS. POPOV (*trying to cry him down*). Boor, boor, boor!

SMIRNOV. It is high time we did away with the old superstition that it is only a man who is forced to give satisfaction. If there is equity at all let there be equity in all things. There's a limit!

MRS. POPOV. You wish to fight a duel? Very well.

SMIRNOV. Immediately.

MRS. POPOV. Immediately. My husband had pistols. I'll bring them. (*She hurries away, then turns.*) Oh, what a pleasure it will be to put a bullet in your impudent head. Devil take you! (*She goes out.*)

SMIRNOV. I'll shoot her down! I'm no fledgling, no sentimental young puppy. For me there is no weaker sex.

LUKA. Oh, sir. (*Falls to his knees.*) Have mercy on me, an old man, and go away. You have frightened me to death already and now you want to fight a duel.

SMIRNOV (*paying no attention*). A duel. That's equity, that's emancipation. In that way the sexes are made equal. I'll shoot her down as a matter of principle. What can a person say to such a woman? (*Imitating her.*) "Devil take you. I'll put a bullet in your impudent head." What can a person say to that? She was angry, her eyes blazed, she accepted the challenge. On my honour it's the first time in my life that I ever saw such a woman.

LUKA. Oh, sir! Go away! Go away from here!

SMIRNOV. That *is* a woman. I can understand her. A real woman. No shilly-shallying, but fire, powder, and noise! It would be a pity to shoot a woman like that.

LUKA (*weeping*). Oh, sir; go away. (*Enter* MRS. POPOV.)

MRS. POPOV. Here are the pistols. But before we have our duel, please show me how to shoot. I have never had a pistol in my hand before!

LUKA. God be merciful and have pity upon us! I'll go and get the gardener and the coachman. Why has this horror come to us! (*He goes out.*)

SMIRNOV (*looking at the pistols*). You see, there are different pistols. There are special duelling pistols with cap and ball. But these are revolvers, Smith & Wesson, with ejectors, fine pistols! A pair like that cost at least ninety rubles. This is the way to hold a revolver. (*Aside.*) Those eyes, those eyes! A real woman!

MRS. POPOV. Like this?

SMIRNOV. *Yes.* Then you pull the hammer back—so—then you aim—put your head back a little—just stretch out your arm, please. So—then press your finger on the thing like that, and there you are! The chief thing is this: don't get excited, don't hurry your aim, and take care that your hand doesn't tremble.

MRS. POPOV. It isn't wise to shoot inside; let's go into the garden.

SMIRNOV. *Yes*—I'll tell you now, I am going to shoot into the air.

MRS. POPOV. Nonsense! Why?

SMIRNOV. Because—because —— That's my business.

MRS. POPOV. You are afraid. Yes. No, no, my dear sir, no flinching! Please follow me. I won't rest until I've made a hole in that head of yours I hate so much. Are you afraid?

SMIRNOV. Yes, I'm afraid.

MRS. POPOV. You are lying. Why won't you fight?

SMIRNOV. Because—because—I—like you.

MRS. POPOV (*with an angry laugh*). You like me! He dares to say he likes me. (*She points to the door.*) Go.

SMIRNOV (*laying the revolver silently on the table, takes his hat and starts; at the door he stops a moment, gazing at her silently, then he approaches her hesitatingly*). Listen. Are you still angry? I was mad as the devil, but please understand me—how can I express

myself? —— The thing is like this—such things are ——(*He raises his voice.*) Now, is it my fault that you owe me money? (*Grasps the chair back, which breaks.*) What breakable furniture you have! I like you! Do you understand?—I—I'm almost in love!

MRS. POPOV. Leave. I hate you.

SMIRNOV. Lord! What a woman! I've never in my life met one like her. I'm lost, ruined! I've been caught like a mouse in a trap.

MRS. POPOV. Go, or I'll shoot.

SMIRNOV. Shoot! What happiness to die in sight of those beautiful eyes, to die from the revolver in this little velvet hand—I'm mad! Consider it and decide immediately, for if I go now we shall never see each other again. Decide—speak —— I am a noble, a respectable man, I have an income of ten thousand, I can shoot a coin thrown into the air—I own several fine horses. Will you be my wife?

MRS. POPOV (*swings the revolver angrily*). I'll shoot!

SMIRNOV. My mind is not clear—I can't understand. Servant—water! I have fallen in love like any young man. (*He takes her hand and she cries with pain.*) I love you! (*He kneels.*) I love you as I have never loved before. Twelve women I jilted, nine jilted me, but not one of them all have I loved as I love you. I am conquered, lost, I lie at your feet like a fool and beg for your hand. Shame and disgrace! For five years I haven't been in love, I thanked the Lord for it, and now I am caught. I beg for your hand! Yes or no? Will you? —— Good! (*He gets up and goes to the door quickly.*)

MRS. POPOV. Wait a moment ——

SMIRNOV (*stopping*). Well?

MRS. POPOV. Nothing. You may go. But—wait a moment. No, go on, go on. I hate you. Or—no: don't go. Oh, if you knew how angry I was, how angry! (*She throws the revolver onto the chair.*) My finger is swollen from this thing. (*She angrily tears out her handkerchief.*) What are you standing there for? Get out!

SMIRNOV. Farewell!

MRS. POPOV. Yes, go. (*Cries out.*) Why are you going? Wait—no, go! Oh, how angry I am! Don't come too near, don't come too near—er—come—no nearer.

SMIRNOV (*approaching her*). How angry I am with myself! To fall

in love like a schoolboy, to throw myself on my knees. I've got a chill! (*Strongly.*) I love you. This is fine—all I needed was to fall in love. To-morrow I have to pay my interest, the hay harvest has begun, and then you appear. (*He takes her in his arms.*) I can never forgive myself.

MRS. POPOV. Go away! Take your hands off me! I hate you—you—this is —— (*A long kiss.*) (*Enter* LUKA *with an ax, the* GARDENER *with a rake, the* COACHMAN *with a pitch-fork, workmen with poles.*)

LUKA (*staring at the pair*). Merciful Heavens! (*A long pause.*)

MRS. POPOV (*dropping her eyes*). Tell them in the stable that Tobby isn't to have any oats.

CURTAIN

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Clark, S. H. *The Interpretation of the Printed Page.* (Row, Peterson and Company.)
Invaluable for its lucid treatment of grouping, group sequence, coordination, and subordination.

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